

out significance and worth to most people of the younger generation, "for the Word of God has departed from His house and that which is preached there is not the Word of God, but the earth-bound speculations of men. The holy men of old believed in the message they were called to preach, but the human spirit has now become so proud that it feels itself capable of discovering the truth without the light of the Gospel, and so faith has died. My Brethren!" he exclaims, "Let us not, if we share this blindness and contempt for the heavenly light, be false and shameless enough to desecrate the Holy Place by appearing there as preachers of a Christianity in which we ourselves do not believe!"

The sermon was delivered with much force and eloquence. Grundtvig felt himself stirred by the strength of his own argument; and a comparison of the warm devotional spirit of a church service, as he remembered it from his childhood, with the cold indifference of later days moved him to sentimental tears, the first pious tears that he had shed for many years, he said later. Even the censors were so impressed that they unanimously awarded him the mark of excellent, a generosity they bitterly regretted a few weeks later. For Grundtvig, contrary to his promise—as the censors asserted but Grundtvig denied—published his sermon. And it was warmly received by the Evangelicals as the first manna that had fallen in a desert for many years. But the Rationalists violently condemned it and presented the Committee on Church Affairs with an indignant protest against its author "for having grossly insulted the Danish clergy."

Considering the enthusiastic approval the sermon had received in various quarters, the committee would gladly have squashed the complaint. But the complainers, comprising many of the most influential pastors in the city, were too powerful to be ignored. And so Grundtvig was found guilty "of having willfully insulted the Danish clergy, both individually and as a body," and sentenced to receive a reprimand by the dean of the theological faculty.

When Grundtvig on January 11, 1811, presented himself before the dean to receive his reprimand, he looked so pale and shaken that even the worthy official took compassion upon him and advised him privately that he must not take his sentence too seriously. It was not, however, the stern reprimand of the dean but an experience of far greater consequence that so visibly blanched the cheeks of the defendant.

The prospect of entering the active ministry caused Grundtvig

to examine seriously his own attitude toward Christianity. And although the bishop vetoed his assignment to Udby and thus released him from the immediate prospect of entering the pulpit, this did not stop the trend of his thoughts. He had lost his former indifference toward religion and discovered the historical significance of Christianity, but just what did the Christian faith mean to him personally?

He was still pondering this question, when in the fall of 1810, he commenced a study of the Crusades, "the heroic age of Christianity," as one historian called the period. The phrase appealed to him. He had lately wandered through the mystic halls of Northern gods and heroes and deplored the decay of their heroic spirit. He admired the heroic, and his heart still wavered between the mighty Wodin and the meek and lowly Christ. But the heroic age of Christianity—was it possible then that Christianity too could rise to the heroic?

In the course of his study he read **The Early History of Prussia** by A. von Kotzebue in which the author, after ridiculing "the missionary zeal that, like a fire on the steppes, caught the kings of Poland and Scandinavia and moved them to frantic efforts for the conversion of neighboring peoples," proudly stated, "But while her neighbors all accepted Christianity and the withered cross drew steadily nearer to the green oak, Prussia remained faithful to her ancient gods."

"The withered Cross!" The words stung Grundtvig to the quick. He hurled the book away, sprang up and stormed about the room, vowing that he would henceforth dedicate his life to the cause of the spurned emblem.

A few weeks of restless exaltation followed. He read his Bible, studied Luther's catechism and pondered the ways and means of accomplishing a reform of his church, especially a reform inspired by pen and ink. But his **New Year's Night**, a small book published during this period, shows his still troublesome uncertainty, his constant wavering between the old gods and the Christ of the Gospels, between various degrees of Rationalism and a full acceptance of the mystery of the cross. In a mighty hymn of praise to the suffering Savior, he wrote many years later: "Yes, my heart believes the wonder of Thy cross, which ages ponder—"but he had yet to pass through the depths before he could say that. Even so, he now exultingly wrote: "On the rim of the bottomless abyss toward which our age is blindly hastening, I will stand and confront it with a pic-

ture, illumined by two shining lights, the Word of God, and the testimony of history. As long as God gives me strength to lift up my voice, I will call and admonish my people in His name."

But from this pinnacle of proud exultation, he was suddenly hurled into the abyss when, like a bolt of lightning, the thought struck him: But are you yourself a Christian, have you received the forgiveness of your sin?

"It struck me like a hammer, crushing the rock," he said later, "what the Lord tells the ungodly: 'What hast thou to declare my statutes or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth, seeing that thou hatest my instruction and castest my word behind thee!'" Gone like a dream were now all his proud fancies. Only one thought filled his whole being—to obtain the forgiveness of his sin and the assurance of God's grace. But so violent became his struggle that his mind at times reeled on the brink of insanity. His young friends stood loyally by him, comforting and guarding him as far as they could. And when it became clear that he must be removed from the noise of the city, one of them, F. Sibbern, volunteered to take him home. There his old parents received him with understanding, even rejoicing that anxiety for his soul and not other things had so disturbed his mind.

The peace of the quiet countryside, the understanding care of his parents and the soothing influence of their firm Evangelical faith acted as a balm to Grundtvig's struggling spirit. He loved to enter the old church of his childhood, to hear his father preach, or sit alone before the altar in meditation and prayer. And there before the altar of the church in which he had been baptized and confirmed, he at last found peace, the true peace of God that passeth all understanding.

After the great change in his life, Grundtvig now wished most heartily to become his father's assistant. The elder Grundtvig had already forwarded his resignation from the pastorate but was more than happy to apply for its return and for the appointment of his son as his assistant. And so, Grundtvig was ordained at Copenhagen, May 11, 1811, and installed at Udby a few days later. He was back again in the old church of his childhood.

The Lonely Defender of the Bible

GRUNDTVIG began his work at Udby with all the zeal of a new convert. He ministered to young and old, spent himself in work for the sick and the poor, and preached the Gospel with a fervor that was new, not only to the people of Udby, but to most people of that generation. If other things had not intervened, like his father, he might have spent his life as a successful country pastor. But his father died January 5, 1813. The authorities refused to confirm Grundtvig in the vacant charge, and he and his mother, shortly afterward, were compelled to leave the parsonage that had been their home for more than forty years. His mother settled in Prastø, a small city a few miles from Udby, and Grundtvig returned to Copenhagen to search for a new position, a task that this time proved both long and painful.

Among available positions, Grundtvig especially coveted a professorship in history at the newly founded university of Oslo, Norway, at which three of his friends, S. B. Hersleb, Niels Trechow and George Sverdrup, had already obtained employment. But although these friends worked zealously for his appointment, even after the separation of Norway from Denmark, their efforts were fruitless. Grundtvig was not destined to leave his native land. Nor were his attempts to secure other work successful. In spite of the fact that he applied for almost every vacancy in the church, even the smallest, his powerful enemies among the Rationalists were influential enough to prevent his appointment to any of them.

Meanwhile he was by no means idle. Following his conversion, he felt for a time like a man suddenly emerging from darkness into the brightness of a new day. Old things had passed away, but the brilliance of the new light confused him. What could he do? How many of his former interests were reconcilable with his new views? Could he, for instance, continue his writings? "When my eyes were opened," he writes, "I considered all things not directly concerned with God a hindrance to the blessed knowledge of my Lord, Jesus Christ." After a time he saw, however, that his ability to write might be accepted as a gift from God to be used in His service. "The poet when inspired," he says, "may proclaim a message from

above to the world below," and so, "after dedicating it to Himself, the Lord again handed me the harp that I had placed upon His altar."

During his brief stay at Udby, Grundtvig published three larger works: **Episodes from the Battle between Ases and Norns**, **Saga** and **A New Year's Gift for 1812**. The first of these was nearly completed before his conversion, and as he now reread the manuscript, its content almost shocked him. Was it possible that he had felt and written thus only a few months ago! He thought of destroying the work but decided to recast it in conformity with his present views and to express these clearly in a preface. With the completion of this task, however, he took a long leave from the "ice-cold giants of the North" that had so long engrossed his attention.

After his brief visit with the heroes of the past, Grundtvig again turned his attention to their descendants in the present. And the contrast was almost startling. The war still was dragging on and the country sinking deeper and deeper into the morass of political, commercial and economic difficulties. But the majority of the people seemed completely indifferent to her plight. "They talked of nothing," Grundtvig says, "but of what they had eaten, worn and amused themselves with yesterday, or what they would eat, wear and amuse themselves with tomorrow." Was it possible that these people could be descendants of the giants whose valor and aggressive spirit had once challenged the greater part of Europe?

Grundtvig was convinced that the spiritual apathy of his people resulted from the failure of their spiritual leaders to uphold the Evangelical faith, and that the salvation of the nation depended on a true revival of Evangelical Christianity. For this reason he now exerted every means at his command to induce the people and, especially, their leaders to return to the old paths. In numerous works, both in verse and in prose, he urged the people to renew the faith of their fathers and challenged their leaders to take a definite stand for Biblical Christianity. He became the lonely defender of the Bible.

Among outstanding personalities of that day, there were especially two that attracted widespread attention: J. P. Mynster, assistant pastor at the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen, and Adam Gottlieb Oehlenschlaeger, the dramatic poet, then at the height of his fame. With their influence these men, as Grundtvig

saw it, might give a strong impetus to the much needed awakening; and, he therefore, approached them personally.

Rev. Mynster, a stepson of Grundtvig's maternal uncle, after a period of rationalism, had experienced a quiet conversion to Evangelical faith and won a respected name as a faithful and gifted preacher of the Gospel, a name which he retained throughout his conspicuous career as pastor of the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen and, later, as Bishop of Sjælland. He and Grundtvig, working to the same purpose, ought to have united with another, but they were both too individualistic in temperament and views to join forces. Mynster was coldly logical, calm and reserved, a lover of form and orderly progress. Grundtvig was impetuous, and volcanic, in constant ferment, always in search of spiritual reality and wholly indifferent to outward appearances. His own experience had led him to believe that a return to Evangelical Christianity could be effected only through a clean break with Rationalism, and he could not understand Mynster's apparent attempt to temporize and bring about a gradual transition from one to the other. There should be no compromise between truth and falsehood. All believers in the Gospel should stand up and proclaim it fearlessly, no matter what the consequences.

And so Grundtvig wrote to Mynster: "Dear Rev. Mynster, I owe you an apology for asking a question that in our days may appear inexcusable: What is your real belief regarding the Bible and the faith of Jesus Christ? If you humbly believe in God's Word, I shall rejoice with you even if you differ with me in all other things. Dear Rev. Mynster—for you are that to me—if my question appears unseemly, you must not let it hurt you, for I have written only as my heart dictates." But Mynster did feel offended and answered Grundtvig very coldly that his questions implied an unwarranted and offensive doubt of his sincerity that must make future intercourse between them difficult—if not impossible.

Nor was Grundtvig more successful with a letter of similar purport to Oehlenschlaeger whose later writings he found lacked the spiritual sincerity of his earlier work. "My concern about this," he wrote, "is increased by the thought that this lessening of spirituality must be expressive of a change in your own spiritual outlook, your inner relationship with God whom all spiritual workers should serve, counting it a greater achievement to inspire their fellow men with a true adoration of our Lord than to win the acclaim of the world." But like Mynster the highly feted poet accepted this frank

questioning of his inner motive as an unwarranted impertinence, the stupid intrusion of an intolerable fanatic with whom no friend of true enlightenment could have anything to do. Grundtvig was fast finding out what it means to be counted a fool for Christ's sake—or for what he thought was Christ's sake.

In the midst of these troubles Grundtvig again turned his attention to history, his favorite subject from childhood days. His retreat from the present to the past implied no abolition, however, of his resolve to dedicate himself to a spiritual revival of his people. Through his historical work he wished to show the influence of Christianity upon the people of Europe. "That the life of every people," he writes, "is and must be a fruit of faith should be clear to all. For who can dispute that every human action—irrespective of how little considered it may have been—is expressive of its doer's attitude, of his way of feeling and thinking. But what determines a man's way of thinking except his essential thoughts concerning the relationship between God and the world, the visible and the invisible? Every serious thinker, therefore, must recognize the importance of faith in the furtherance of science, the progress of nations and the life of the state. It is a fearful delusion that man can be immoral, an unbeliever, even an enemy of the cross of Christ, and yet a furtherer of morality and science, a good neighbor and a benefactor to his country."

A Brief Survey of the World's History, which Grundtvig published in 1812, is thus the opposite of an objective presentation of historical events. It is a Christian philosophy of history, an attempt to prove the truth of the Gospel by its effect upon the nations. With the Bible before him Grundtvig weighs and evaluates people and events upon the scale of the revealed word. And his judgment is often relentless, stripping both persons and events of the glorified robes in which history and traditions invested them. In answer to countless protests against such a method of reading history, Grundtvig contends that the Christian historian must accept the consequences of his faith. He cannot profess the truth of Christianity and ignore its implication in the life of the world. If the Gospel be true, history must be measured by its relation to its truth.

Grundtvig's history caused a sensation, especially on account of its frank appraisal of many well-known persons. Nearly all praised its lucid style; a few, such as George Sverdrup, spoke highly of its strikingly original estimate and correlation of events; but the

intelligentsia condemned it as the work of an impossible fanatic. With this work, they claimed, Grundtvig had clearly removed himself from the pale of intelligent men.

But while his enemies raged, Grundtvig was already busy with another work: **A Brief Account of God's Way with the Danish and Norwegian Peoples**. This history which, written in verse and later published under the title of **Roskilde Rhymes**, was first read at a diocesan convention in Roskilde Cathedral, the Westminster Abbey of Denmark. Although the poem contained many urgent calls to the assembled pastors to awake and return to the way of the fathers, whose bones rested within the walls of the historic sanctuary, its reading caused no immediate resentment. Most of the reverend listeners are reported, in fact, to have been peacefully asleep when late in the evening Grundtvig finished the reading of his lengthy manuscript. But a paper on "Polemics and Tolerance" which he read at another convention two years later kept his listeners wide awake.

"Our day has inherited two shibboleths from the eighteenth century: enlightenment and tolerance. By the last of these words most people understand an attitude of superior neutrality toward the opinions of others, even when these opinions concern the highest spiritual welfare of man. Such an attitude has for its premise that good and evil, truth and falsehood are not separate and irreconcilable realities but only different phases of the same question. But every Christian, thoroughly convinced of the antagonism and irreconcilability of truth with falsehood, must inevitably hate and reject such a supposition. If Christianity be true, tolerance toward opinions and teachings denying its truth is nothing but a craven betrayal of both God and man. It is written, 'Judge and condemn no one' but not 'Judge and condemn nothing.' For every Christian must surely both judge and condemn evil.

"There are times when to fight for Christianity may not be an urgent necessity; but that cannot be so in our days when every one of its divine truths is mocked and assailed.

"You call me a self-seeking fanatic, but if I be that, why are you yourself silent? If I be misleading those who follow me, why are you, the true watchmen of Zion, not exerting yourself to lead them aright? I stand here the humblest of Danish pastors, a minister without a pulpit, a man reviled by the world, shorn of my reputation as a writer, and held to be devoid of all intelligence and truth. Even so I solemnly declare that the religion now preached

in our Danish church is not Christianity, is nothing but a tissue of deception and falsehood, and that unless Danish pastors bestir themselves and fight for the restoration of God's word and the Christian faith there will soon be no Christian church in Denmark."

The immediate effect of this bold challenge was a stern reprimand from Bishop Frederik Munter, accompanied by a solemn warning that if he ever again ventured to voice a similar judgment upon his fellow pastors, sterner measures would at once be taken against him. Besides this, his enemies raved, some of his few remaining friends broke with him, and H. C. Ørsted, the famous discoverer of electro-magnetism, continued an attack upon him that for bitterness has no counterpart in Danish letters. In the midst of this storm Grundtvig remained self-possessed, answering his critic quite calmly and even with a touch of humor. Although relentless in a fight for principles, he was never vindictive toward his personal enemies. In 1815, he published a collection of poems, **Kvaedlinger**, in which he asks, "Who knoweth of peace who never has fought, whoso has been saved and suffered naught?" And these lines no doubt express his personal attitude toward the battles of life.

Being without a pulpit of his own, Grundtvig, after his return to Copenhagen, frequently accepted invitations to preach for other pastors. But as the opposition against him grew, these invitations decreased and, after the Roskilde affair, only one church, the church of Frederiksberg, was still open to him. Grundtvig felt his exclusion very keenly, but he knew that even friendly pastors hesitated to invite him for fear of incurring the disapproval of superiors or the displeasure of influential parishioners. And so, at the close of a Christmas service in the Frederiksberg church in 1815, he solemnly announced that he would not enter a pulpit again until he had been duly appointed to do so by the proper authorities.

Grundtvig's withdrawal from the church, though pleasing to his active enemies, was a great disappointment to his friends. His services had always been well attended, and his earnest message had brought comfort to many, especially among the distressed Evangelicals. But others, too, felt the power of his word. Thus a man in Copenhagen, after attending one of his services, wrote to a friend, "that he had laughed at the beginning of the sermon and wept at its conclusion" and that "it was the only earnest testimony

he had ever heard from a pulpit." And a reporter writing to a Copenhagen newspaper about his last service said, "Our famous Grundtvig preached yesterday at Frederiksberg church to such a crowd of people that the church was much too small to accommodate them. Here were people from all walks of life, and the speaker, we are convinced, stirred them to the bottom of their souls. Here was a Mynster's clarity, a Fallesen's earnestness, and a Balle's appeal united with a Nordahl Brun's manliness and admirable language." And this about a man for whom his church had no room!

Thus Grundtvig instead of the friendly co-operation he had hoped for especially from the spiritual and intellectual leaders of the people found himself virtually shut out from the circle to which he naturally belonged, and from the church he loved, perhaps better than any man of his generation.

But if his hope of enlisting the leaders in a campaign to revive the spiritual life of the common people had been disappointed, his own determination to devote his life to that purpose remained unshaken. If he could look for no help from the recognized leaders of his nation, he must somehow gain a hearing from the common people themselves. His personal contact with these, however, was rather slight. Except for his brief work as a pastor, he had so far spent the greater part of his life in intellectual pursuits quite removed from the interest of the common man. And the question was then how he, a man without any special position and influence, could reach the ears of his countrymen.

In searching for an answer to this question, he remembered the two things that most profoundly had influenced his own spiritual outlook, his study of the traditions and history of his people, and his religious awakening in 1810. Was it not possible then that a like change might be engendered in others by presenting them with a picture of their own glorious past or, as his friend Ingemann later expressed it, by calling forth the generations that died to testify against the generation that lived? In presenting such a picture he would not have to rely on his own inventiveness but could use material already existing, foremost among which were the famous **Sagas of Norwegian Kings** by Snorra Sturlason, and **Denmark's Chronicle** by Saxo Grammaticus, the former written in Icelandic, and the latter in Latin.

When Grundtvig presented this plan to his remaining friends, they received it at once with enthusiasm and began the organiza-

tion of societies both in Denmark and Norway for the purpose of sponsoring its execution, in itself a most herculean task.

The two books contain together about fifteen hundred large and closely printed pages and present a circumstantial account of the early mythological and factual history of the two nations. Even a merely literal translation of them might well consume years of labor. But Grundtvig's plan went much farther than mere literal translation. Wishing to appeal to the common people, he purposed to popularize the books and to transcribe them in a purer and more idiomatic Danish than the accepted literary language of the day, a Danish to be based on the dialects of the common people, the folk-songs, popular proverbs, and the old hymns. It was a bold undertaking, comparable to the work of Luther in modelling the language of the German Bible after the speech of the man in the street and the mother at the cradle, or to the great effort of Norway in our days to supplant the Danish-Norwegian tongue with a language from the various dialects of her people. Nor can it be said that Grundtvig was immediately successful in his attempt. His version of the sagas sounds somewhat stilted and artificial, and it never became popular among the common people for whom it was especially intended. Eventually, however, he did develop his new style into a plain, forceful mode of expression that has greatly enriched the Danish language of today.

For seven years Grundtvig buried himself in "the giant's mount," merging only occasionally for the pursuit of various studies in connection with his work or to voice his views on certain issues that particularly interested him. He discovered a number of errors in the Icelandic version of Beowulf and made a new Danish translation of that important work; he engaged in a bitter literary battle with Paul Mueller, a leader among the younger academicians, in defence of the celebrated lyric poet, Jens Baggesen, who had aroused the wrath of the students by criticising their revered dramatist, Øehlenschlaeger; and he fought a furious contest with the greatly admired song and comedy writer, John L. Heiberg, in defence of his good friend, Bernhard Severin Ingemann, whose excellent but overly sentimental lyrics had invited the barbed wit of the humorist. But although Grundtvig's contributions to these disputes were both able and pointed, their main effect was to widen the breach between him and the already antagonistic intellectuals.

In 1817 Grundtvig published the second part of **World Chronicles**, and a few issues of a short-lived periodical entitled "Dannevirke" which among other excellent contributions presented his

splendid poem, "The Easter Lily," a poetic dramatization of our Lord's resurrection, about which the poet, Baggesen, said that "it outweighed all Øehlenschlaeger's tragedies and that he himself had moments when he would rather have been the author of this incomparably beautiful poem than of everything he himself had written."

Grundtvig began his translation of the sagas on a wave of high enthusiasm. But as the years multiplied, the interest of his supporters waned and he himself wearied of the task. He began, besides, to doubt his ability to resurrect the heroic dead in such a manner that they could revive the drooping spirit of the living.

In a welcome to Ingemann, on his return from a tour abroad, he expresses the hope that the poet will now devote his gifts to a reincarnation of his country's old heroes. He himself has tried to do this. "He has made armor, shields and swords for them of saga's steel, and borrowed horses for them from the ancient bards, but he has no cloth fit for the coats of such elegant knights nor feathers beautiful enough to adorn their helmets. He can sound a challenge but has no voice for singing; he can ring a bell but can not play the lute." In other words, he can depict the thoughts and ideals of the old heroes but lacks the poetical ability to recreate them as living personalities—a remarkably true estimate of his own limitations.

The discovery that his translation of the sagas was not accomplishing its intended purpose, and a growing apprehension that the written word was, perhaps, impotent to revive the spiritual life of his people, engendered in him an increasing wish to leave "the mount of the dead" and re-enter the world of the living. His economic circumstances also necessitated a change. In 1818 he had married Elizabeth Blicher, the daughter of a brother pastor, and he found it well nigh impossible to support his wife and growing family on the meager returns from his writings and a small pension which the government allowed him for his work with the sagas.

Spurred by these reasons, he applied for almost every vacancy in the church, even the smallest, and, in 1821, succeeded in obtaining an appointment to the pastorate at Prastø, a small city on the south-eastern shores of Sjælland.

Grundtvig was well satisfied with his new charge. He was kindly received by his congregation; the city was quite close to his beloved Udby, and his mother still lived there. "In the loveliest surroundings my eyes have ever seen and among a friendly peo-

ple," he writes, "my strength soon revived so that I could continue my literary work and even complete my wearisome translation of the sagas."

An incident is related from his work at Prastø which throws a somewhat revealing light upon his ability as a pastor. At his only confirmation service there, the confirmants, we are told, wept so that he had to pause several times in his address to them in order to let them regain their composure. Since he was always quite objective in his preaching and heartily disbelieved in the usual revival methods, the incident illustrates his rare ability to profoundly stir even the less mature of his hearers by his objective presentation of the Gospel. Even his bitterest enemies could not deny the evident effectiveness of his ministry in every charge he served.

His work at Prastø was, however, of brief duration. In 1822, less than two years after his installation, he received and accepted a call as assistant pastor at Our Savior's Church in Copenhagen, thus attaining his long deferred wish for a pulpit in the capital.

Chapter Thirteen

The Living Word

GRUNDTVIG began his ministry in the capital with high hopes, but he was soon disappointed. His services as usual attracted large audiences, audiences that frequently overflowed the spacious sanctuary. But these came from all parts of the city, an ever changing throng from which it was quite impossible to create a real congregation. The parish itself was so large that the mere routine duties of his office consumed much of his time. There were mass weddings, mass baptisms, mass funerals for people of whom he knew little and could have no assurance that he was not "giving the holy unto dogs or casting pearls before swine." With the prevailing decay of church-life most pastors accepted these conditions with equanimity, but to Grundtvig they constituted an increasingly heavy burden.

He was still lonely. Awakened Christians were few, and his

fellow pastors were nearly all Rationalists who looked upon him as a dangerous fanatic whom it was best to avoid. Grundtvig's opinion about them, though different, was scarcely higher. It provoked him to observe pastors openly repudiating doctrines and ordinances which they had sworn to defend. To his mind such a course was both dishonorable to themselves and unjust toward their congregations which, whether or not they approved of these unlawful acts, had to be served by their parish pastors. The majority, it is true, accepted the new doctrines with indifference. Rationalism then as now promoted apathy rather than heresy. But Grundtvig observed its blighting effect everywhere, even upon himself.

Signs of a new awakening, nevertheless, were appearing here and there, especially in certain rural communities. Influenced by the Haugean movement in Norway and Grundtvig's own earlier work, scattering groups of Evangelicals and Pietists began to evince new life and activity. Peasants in a number of parishes in Jutland refused to accept the Evangelical Christian hymnal and a new rationalistic colored catechism, choosing to go to jail rather than to compromise their faith; and groups of Evangelical laymen on the island of Fyn began to hold private assemblies at which they nourished themselves by reading Luther's sermons and singing Kingo's and Brorson's hymns. Most if not all of these groups admired Grundtvig for his bold defiance of Biblical Christianity and looked hopefully to him for encouragement. If, as his enemies charged, he had wished to make himself the head of a party, he could easily have done so by assuming the leadership of the private assemblies.

But Grundtvig never compromised his views for the sake of attracting a following, and he did not approve of private assemblies. Such groups, he wrote, had frequently disrupted the church, bred contempt for Scripture, and fostered a perverted form of piety. Even as a release from the present deplorable situation, they might easily produce more harm than good.

Although Grundtvig could not approve of the assemblies he, nevertheless, sympathized deeply with the distressed laity. A layman was then bound to his parish, and Grundtvig clearly understood the difficulty of laymen who had to accept the ministry, have their children baptized, instructed and confirmed by pastors denying fundamental doctrines of their faith. With his usual frankness he therefore threw caution to the winds and reminded the

pastors that it was their own failure to preach and defend the Lutheran faith that was forcing Evangelical laymen to seek in the assemblies what was arbitrarily withheld from them in the church. "Whether it be good or bad, recommendable or deplorable," Grundtvig wrote, "it is, at any rate, a fact that the spirit of the church service has changed so greatly during the last half century that it is almost impossible for an Evangelical Christian to derive any benefit from it, and it is this situation that has forced earnest laymen to invent such a substitute for the church as the private assemblies evidently are."

For a number of years Grundtvig thought and wrote almost ceaselessly about this problem. With conditions so perverted that the lawbreakers were imprisoning the victims of their own lawlessness, something ought evidently to be done about it. But what could he do?

He tried to attack Rationalism from new angles. In a carefully written article in "The Theological Monthly," a magazine that he published in collaboration with the learned but crusty Dr. G. A. Rudelbach, he argued that any inquiry concerning the nature of Christianity should distinguish between the questions: What is true Christianity? and Is Christianity True? The first was a historical question, and could be answered only by an examination of the original teachings of Christianity; the second was a question of conscience and depended on the attitude of the individual. He was he asserted, perfectly willing to recognize the right of the Rationalists to believe what ever they choose, but as a historian he had to protest against the propagation of any belief under the name of Christianity that clearly denied what Christianity originally affirmed.

His writing, however, produced no evident result. The rationalists either maintained a contemptuous silence or answered him by their favorite cry of ignorance and fanaticism. The true teachings of Christianity, they asserted, could be ascertained only by the trained theologian, able to read the Bible in the original and trained to interpret it in the light of current knowledge. Such men knew, it was claimed, that many of the doctrines formerly held by the church, such as the divinity of Christ, the atonement and the triunity of God, were not found in the Scriptures at all or were based on misread or misinterpreted texts.

Although these contentions were almost as old as Christianity itself, Grundtvig still found that a clear refutation of them was prac-

tically impossible. He could not disprove them by Scripture, for the Rationalists would claim their interpretation of the Bible to be as trustworthy as his own; nor could he appeal to the confessions, for his opponents openly repudiated these as antiquated conceptions of a less enlightened age. His only hope of giving any real guidance to the confused and distressed laity of his church thus appeared to depend on the possibility of discovering an expression of Christianity so authoritative that the most learned perverter of the faith could not repudiate it and so plain that the humblest believer could understand it. In his anxiety it even seemed to him that the Lord had failed adequately to provide for His little ones if He had not supplied them with such a shield against the storm of confusing doctrines.

"Being greatly distressed with the thought that all humble Christians must either fall into doubt concerning their only Savior and His Gospel or build their faith on the contradictory teachings of learned theologians," he wrote, "I perceived clearly the pressing need of the church for a simpler, more dependable and authoritative statement of that word of God which shall never pass away than all the book-worms of the world could ever produce. But while my anxiety for the distressed laity of my church grew and I sought night and day for a clear testimony of Jesus that would enable them to try the spirits whether they be of God, a good angel whispered to me: 'Why seekest thou the living among the dead?' Then the scales fell from my eyes, and I saw clearly that the word of God which I so anxiously sought could be no other than that which at all times, in all churches and by all Christians has been accepted as a true expression of their faith and the covenant of their baptism, the Apostolic Creed."

In his search for an effective means of arming the laity against the confusing claims of the Rationalists, Grundtvig thus came to place the Creed above the Bible, or rather to assert that the two should stand side by side, and that all explanations of the latter should agree with the plain articles of the former so that every Christian personally could weigh the truth or error of what was taught by comparing it with his baptismal covenant.

Grundtvig supported his "great discovery" with passages from the Bible and the church fathers, especially Irenaeus. He advanced the theory that Jesus had taught the Creed to His disciples during the forty days after His resurrection in which He remained with them, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God";

that the Creed through the early centuries had been regarded as too sacred to commit to writing and, therefore had been transmitted orally; and that it constituted, together with the words of institution of the sacraments and the Lord's prayer, in a special sense "the living word of God" by which He builds and vivifies His church. It should be stated, however, that Grundtvig's intention by distinguishing between what he called "the living" and "the written word," was not to belittle the Bible but only to define its proper place, the place of enlightening and guiding those, who through God's living covenant with them in their baptism already have become Christians. A Christian, he believed, is reborn in his baptism, nourished in the Communion and enlightened by the Word.

A critical examination of Grundtvig's theory, about which thousands of pages have been written, lies beyond the scope of this work. Grundtvig himself felt that his "discovery" had given him a solid foundation for his stand against the Rationalists. And his theory unquestionably did enable him, in the midst of an almost hopeless religious confusion, to reassert the essentials of Evangelical Christianity, to refute the contentions of the Rationalists by weighing them on an acknowledged historical basis of faith, and to reemphasize that the Christian church is not a creation of theological speculations but of God's own work in His word and sacraments.

Grundtvig for some time previous to his discovery had felt exceedingly depressed. His long struggle for the reawakening of his people to a richer Christian and national life appeared fruitless. Most of the intellectual and spiritual leaders of his time looked upon the very idea of sharing the richer cultural and spiritual values of life with the common man as a visionary conception of an unstable and erratic mind. One ought naturally, they admitted, to be interested in improving the social and economic conditions of the lower classes, but the higher treasures of mind and spirit belonged in the very nature of things to the cultured few and could not be shared with the common herd.

In spite of these discouragements, Grundtvig somehow experienced a wonderful rebirth of his hope in the spring of 1824, an experience to which he gave eloquent expression in his great poem, "New Year's Morning." He writes in the preface that he has "long enough battled with a witch called indifference, and has discovered that the battle wherein one is most likely to be defeated is

the battle against nothing. He therefore urges his friends to ignore the witch and join him in a determined crusade for a reawakening of the Northern spirit to the accomplishment of Christian deed.

Grundtvig's hope for a season of quiet and peaceful cooperation with his friends was, however, soon shattered. In the summer of 1825, a young professor of theology, H. N. Clausen, published a book entitled: **The Constitution, Doctrine and Rituals of Catholicism and Protestantism**. As Prof. Clausen enjoyed a great popularity among his students and, as a teacher of theology, might influence the course of the Danish church for many years, Grundtvig was very much interested in what he had to say. He obtained the book and read it quickly but thoughtfully, underscoring the points with which he disagreed. And these were numerous. At the very beginning of the book, he found the author asserting that "the Protestant theologian, since he need recognize no restriction of his interpretations by creeds, traditions, or ecclesiastical authorities, is as once infinitely more free and important than his Catholic colleague. For as the Protestant church unlike the Catholic possesses no conclusive and authoritative system of belief either in her creeds or in Scripture, it devolves upon her trained theologians to set forth what the true teachings of Christianity really are. "Why, O why!" the professor exclaims, "should eternal Wisdom have willed revelation to appear in a form so imperfect? What other purpose, I ask you, can an all-wise Providence have had with such a plan than to compel the children of man to recognize that it is only through the exercise of their own, human intelligence that the revelation of God can be comprehended!"

As Grundtvig mused upon these assertions so expressive of all that he had denied and fought against, he felt at once that they constituted a challenge which he could not leave unanswered. He had shortly before written to a friend: "Since the perverters of Christianity have become so self-confident that they will not answer any charge against them except when it is addressed to themselves personally and by name, one may eventually have to employ that form of attack." And that was the form he chose to use in his now famous book, **The Reply of the Church to Prof. H. N. Clausen**.

"By the publication of this book," he writes, "Prof. Clausen has put himself forward as a leader among the enemies of the church and the perverters of God's word in this country. A church, such as he advocates, that has no determinable form, exists only in the brains of the theologians, and must be construed from theol-

ogical speculations on the basis of a discredited Bible and according to the changing thoughts and opinions of man, is plainly nothing but a fantastic dream, a comic if it were not so tragic conception of a Christian congregation which claims to confess the same faith, but knows not what it is, and holds that it is instituted by God, but cannot tell for what purpose before the theologians have found it out.

"Against such a church, I place the historical church, that is the church of the Gospel, instituted by Christ Himself, created by His word and vivified by His Spirit. For I contend that the Christian church now as always consists of that body of believers who truly accept the faith of their baptismal covenant, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper as the faith and means of salvation."

The Reply of the Church caused a sensation. It was read and discussed everywhere. But if Grundtvig had hoped to force a general discussion of the plight of the church, he was disappointed. Prof. Clausen answered him with a lawsuit "for malicious injury to his professional honor"; his enemies all condemned him, and his friends were silent. If they approved of the substance of his charges, they disapproved of their form. Grundtvig appeared to have thrown away the last remnant of his already tattered reputation, and only the years would reveal that in doing so he had struck a deadlier blow against Rationalism than he had expected, that he had, in fact, for years to come made Rationalism impossible in Denmark as a form of Christianity.

Meanwhile the Danish church was preparing to celebrate its thousandth anniversary in May, 1826. Grundtvig looked forward to the event with almost child-like anticipation, hoping that the celebration might serve to awaken a new appreciation of the old church. To heighten the festivities the authorities had authorized pastors to select the hymns for the services in their own churches, and Grundtvig had written and published a pamphlet of hymns to be used in his church. But shortly before the festival, his bishop informed him that only hymns from the authorized hymnal could be chosen. As no one else had composed hymns for the occasion, Grundtvig could not doubt that this new ruling was aimed solely at him, and this new evidence at the length to which his enemies would go for the sake of humiliating him appeared to him like the last straw. He had long suffered under the difficulty of serving a church which honored the law-breaker and persecuted the law-abiding and thought of resigning. But he had a family to support.

And while he himself would gladly bear the poverty his resignation would inevitably bring him, he doubted his right to impose such a burden upon his family. The difficulty was finally solved for him by his wife, who one day came into his study and said: "Father, I know what is troubling you. You wish to resign and hesitate to do so for our sake. But I want you to do whatever you think is right. The Lord will provide for us."

And so it was settled. His resignation was handed to the authorities a few days before the festival, and it was accepted so quickly that he was released from office before the following Sunday. When the festive Sunday came which he had looked forward to with so much pleasure, he sat idly in his study across from the church and watched people come for the service, but another pastor preached the sermon, he had earnestly wished to deliver, and other hymns than his own beloved songs served as vehicles for the people's praise.

Public sentiment regarding Grundtvig's resignation varied. His friends deplored the action, holding that he should have remained in his pastorate both for the sake of his congregation and the cause which he had so ably championed. But his opponents rejoiced, seeing in his resignation just another proof of an erratic mentality. For who had ever heard of a normal person withdrawing from a secure and respectable position without even asking for the pension to which he was entitled?

The six years during which Grundtvig remained without a pulpit were among the busiest and most fruitful of his life. He published his **Sunday-Book**, a collection of sermons which many still rate among the finest devotional books in Danish; made extended visits to England in 1829-1831, for the purpose of studying the old Anglo Saxon manuscripts kept there, an undertaking that awakened the interest of the English themselves in these great treasures; wrote his splendid **Northern Mythology or Picture Language**, and **The World's History after the Best Sources**, works in which he presents the fundamental aspects of his historical, folk and educational views that have made his name known not only in Scandinavia but in almost every country in the world.

Meanwhile he again had entered the pulpit. As a compensation for the loss of his ministry, a group of his friends shortly after his resignation began to hold private assemblies. When Grundtvig still firmly refused to take part in these, they decided to organize an independent congregation, petition the government for permis-

sion to use an abandoned German Lutheran church and call Grundtvig as their pastor. The petition was promptly refused, though Grundtvig himself pleaded with the authorities to permit the organization of an independent congregation as the best means of relieving the dissatisfied members of the church and declared that he would himself join the assemblies unless some such measure of relief was granted. When the authorities ignored his plea, Grundtvig made good his threat and appeared at the assemblies, drawing such a crowd that no private home could possibly hold it, whereupon it was decided to secure a public hall for future meetings. But when the authorities heard this, they suddenly experienced a change of heart and offered the troublesome preacher and his friends the use of Frederik's church for a vesper service each Sunday.

The eight years Grundtvig served as an independent preacher at the Frederik's church were among the happiest in his life. He rejoiced to know that the large, diversified audience crowding the sanctuary each Sunday came wholly of its own free will. It also pleased the now gray-haired pastor to see an increasing number of students become constant attendants at his services. Even so, his position had its drawbacks. He was permitted neither to administer the sacraments nor to instruct the young people, and the authorities even denied him the right to confirm his own sons. Grundtvig felt especially this refusal so keenly that he again was thinking of resigning his pulpit when the king offered him an appointment as pastor of Vartov, a large institution for the aged.

Thus from 1839 until Grundtvig's death the chapel at Vartov became his home and that of his friends and the center of the fast growing Grundtvigian movement. People from all walks of life, from the Queen to the common laborer, became regular attendants at the unpretentious sanctuary, and the eyes of some old people still shine when they recall the moving spirit of the services there, the venerable appearance and warm monotone voice of the pastor, and, especially, the hearty, soul-stirring singing. Many of Grundtvig's own great hymns were introduced at Vartov. From there they spread throughout the church. And it was to a large extent the hearty, inspiring congregational singing at Vartov which made the Danish church a singing church.

The Hymnwriter

Splendid are the heavens high,
Beautiful the radiant sky,
Where the golden stars are shining,
And their rays, to earth inclining,
-: Beckon us to heaven above :-

It was on a Christmas night,
Darkness veiled the starry height;
But at once the heavens hoary
Beamed with radiant light and glory,
-: Coming from a wondrous star :-

When this star so bright and clear
Should illumine the midnight drear,
Then, according to tradition,
Should a king of matchless vision
-: Unto earth from heaven descend :-

Sages from the East afar
When they saw this wondrous star,
Went to worship and adore Him
And to lay their gifts before Him
-: Who was born that midnight hour :-

Him they found in Bethlehem
Without crown or diadem,
They but saw a maiden lowly
With an infant pure and holy
-: Resting in her loving arms :-

Guided by the star they found
Him whose praise the ages sound.
We have still a star to guide us
Whose unsullied rays provide us
-: With the light to find our Lord :-

And this star so fair and bright
Which will ever lead aright,
Is God's word, divine and holy,
Guiding all His children lowly
-: Unto Christ, our Lord and King :-

This lovely, childlike hymn, the first to appear from Grundtvig's pen, was written in the fall of 1810 when its author was still battling with despair and his mind faltering on the brink of in-

sanity. Against this background the hymn appears like a ray of sunlight breaking through a clouded sky. And as such it must undoubtedly have come to its author. As an indication of Grundtvig's simple trust in God, it is noteworthy that another of his most childlike hymns, "God's Child, Do Now Rest Thee," was likewise composed during a similar period of distress that beset him many years later.

For a number of years Grundtvig's hymn of the Wise Men represented his sole contribution to hymnody. Other interests engaged his attention and absorbed his energy. During his years of intense work with the sagas he only occasionally broke his "engagement" with the dead to strike the lyre for the living. In 1815 he translated "In Death's Strong Bonds Our Savior Lay" from Luther, and "Christ Is Risen from the Dead" from the Latin. The three hundredth anniversary of the Reformation brought his adaptation of Kingo's "Like the Golden Sun Ascending" and translations of Luther's "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and "The Bells Ring in the Christmastide." In 1820 he published his now popular "A Babe Is Born at Bethlehem" from an old Latin-Danish text, and 1824 saw his splendid rendering of "The Old Day Song," "With Gladness We Hail the Blessed Day," and his original "On Its Rock the Church of Jesus Stood Mongst Us a Thousand Years."

These songs constitute his whole contribution to hymnody from 1810 to 1825. But the latter year brought a signal increase. In the midst of his fierce battle with the Rationalists he published the first of his really great hymns, a song of comfort to the daughters of Zion, sitting disconsolately at the sickbed of their mother, the church. Her present state may appear so hopeless that her children fear to remember her former glory:

Dares the anxious heart envision
Still its morning dream,
View, despite the world's derision,
Zion's sunlit height and stream?
Wields still anyone the power
To repeat her anthems strong,
And with joyful heart embower,
Zion with triumphant song.

Her condition is not hopeless, however, if her children will gather about her.

Zion's sons and daughters rally
Now upon her ancient wall!
Have her foemen gained the valley,
Yet her ramparts did not fall.

Were her outer walls forsaken
Still her cornerstone remains,
Firm, unconquered and unshaken,
Making futile all their gains.

Another of his great hymns dates from the same year. Grundtvig was in the habit of remaining up all night when he had to speak on the following day. The Christmas of 1825 was particularly trying to him. He had apparently forfeited his last vestige of honor by publishing his **Reply of the Church**; the suit started against him by Professor Clausen still dragged its laborious way through the court; and his anxiety over the present state of the church was greatly increased by the weight of his personal troubles. He felt very much like the shepherds watching their flocks at night, except that no angels appeared to help him with the message his people would expect him to deliver in the morning. Perhaps he was unworthy of such a favor. He rose, as was his custom, and made a round into the bedrooms to watch his children. How innocently they slept! If the angels could not come to him, they ought at least to visit the children. If they heard the message, their elders might perchance catch it through them.

Some such thought must have passed through the mind of the lonely pastor as he sat musing upon his sermon throughout the night, for he appeared unusually cheerful as he ascended his pulpit Christmas morning, preached a joyful sermon, and said, at its conclusion, that he had that night begotten a song which he wished to read to them. That song has since become one of the most beloved Christmas songs in the Danish language. To give an adequate reproduction of its simple, childlike spirit in another language is perhaps impossible, but it is hoped that the translation given below will convey at least an impression of its cheerful welcome to the Christmas angels.

Be welcome again, God's angels bright
From mansions of light and glory
To publish anew this wintry night
The wonderful Christmas story.
Ye herald to all that yearn for light
New year after winter hoary.

With gladness we hear your sweet refrain
In praise of God's glory solely;
Ye will not this wintry night disdain
To enter our dwellings lowly.
And bring to each yearning heart again
The joy that is pure and holy.

In humble homes as in mansions rare
 With light in the windows glowing,
 We harbor the babes as sweet and fair
 As flowers in meadows growing.
 Oh, deign with these little ones to share
 The joy from your message flowing.

Reveal the child in the manger still
 With angels around Him singing
 The song of God's glory, peace, good-will
 That joy to all hearts is bringing,
 While far over mountain, field and hill,
 The bells are with gladness ringing.

God's angels with joy to earth descend
 When hymns to His praise are chanted;
 His comfort and peace our Lord will lend
 To all who for peace have panted;
 The portals of heaven open stand;
 The Kingdom to us is granted.

In 1826 Grundtvig, as already related, published his hymns for the thousand years' festival of his church. But a few months later he again buried himself in his study, putting aside the lyre, which for a little while he had played so beautifully. Many had already noticed his hymns, however, and continued to plead with him for more. The new Evangelical revival, which he had largely inspired, intensified the general dissatisfaction with the rationalistic Evangelical Christian Hymnal, and called for hymns embodying the spirit of the new movement. And who could better furnish these than Grundtvig? Of those who pleaded with him for new hymns, none was more persistent than his friend, Pastor Gunni Busck. When Grundtvig wrote to him in 1832 that his **Northern Mythology** was nearing completion, Busck at once answered: "Do not forget your more important work; do not forget our old hymns! I know no one else with your ability to brush the dust off our old songs." But Grundtvig was still too busy with other things to comply with the wish of his most faithful and helpful friend.

During the ensuing years, however, a few hymns occasionally appeared from his pen. A theological student, L. C. Hagen, secured a few adapted and original hymns from him for a small collection of **Historical Hymns and Rhymes for Children**, which was published in 1832. But the adaptations were not successful. Despite the good opinion of Gunni Busck, Grundtvig was too independent a spirit to adjust himself to the style and mode of others. His originals were much more successful. Among these we find such gems as "Mongst

His Brothers Called the Little," "Move the Signs of Grief and Mourning from the Garden of the Dead," and "O Land of Our King," hymns that rank with the finest he has written.

In 1835 Grundtvig at last wrote to Gunni Busck that he was now ready to commence the long deferred attempt to renew the hymnody of his church. Busck received the information joyfully and at once sent him a thousand dollars to support him during his work. Others contributed their mite, making Grundtvig richer financially than he had been for many years. He rented a small home on the shores of the Sound and began to prepare himself for the work before him by an extensive study of Christian hymnody, both ancient and modern.

"The old hymns sound beautiful to me out here under the sunny sky and with the blue water of the Sound before me," he wrote to Busck. He did not spend his days day-dreaming, however, but worked with such intensity that only a year later he was able to invite subscriptions on the first part of his work. The complete collection was published in 1837 under the title: **Songs of the Danish Church**. It contains in all 401 hymns and songs composed of originals, translations and adaptations from Greek, Latin, German, Icelandic, Anglo-Saxon, English and Scandinavian sources. The material is of very unequal merit, ranging from the superior to the commonplace. As originally composed, the collection could not be used as a hymnal. But many of the finest hymns now used in the Danish church have been selected or adapted from it.

Although **Songs for the Danish Church** is now counted among the great books in Danish, its appearance attracted little attention outside the circle of Grundtvig's friends. It was not even reviewed in the press. The literati, both inside and outside the church, still publicly ignored Grundtvig. But privately a few of them expressed their opinion about the work. Thus a Pastor P. Hjort wrote to Bishop Mynster, "Have you read Grundtvig's **Songs of the Danish Church**? It is a typical Grundtvigian book, wordy, ingenious, mystical, poetical and full of half digested ideas. His language is rich and wonderfully expressive. But he is not humble enough to write hymns."

Meanwhile the demand for a new hymnal or at least for a supplement to the old had become so insistent that something had to be done. J. P. Mynster who, shortly before, had been appointed Bishop of Sjælland, favored a supplement and obtained an authorization from the king for the appointment of a committee to pre-

pare it. The only logical man to head such a committee was, of course, Grundtvig. But Mynster's dislike of his volcanic relative was so deep-rooted that he was incapable of giving any recognition to him. And so in order to avoid a too obvious slight to his country's best known hymnwriter, he assigned the work to an already existing committee on liturgy, of which he himself was president. Thus Grundtvig was forced to sit idly by while the work naturally belonging to him was being executed by a man with no special ability for the task. The supplement appeared in 1843. It contained thirty-six hymns of which six were written by Kingo, seven by Brorson, and one by Grundtvig, the latter being, as Grundtvig humorously remarked, set to the tune of the hymn, "Lord, I Have Done Wrong."

Mynster's influence was great enough to secure the supplement a wide circulation. The collection, nevertheless, failed to satisfy the need of the church. Dissatisfaction with it was so general that the pastors' conference of Copenhagen appointed a committee consisting of Grundtvig, Prof. Martensen, Mynster's own son-in-law, Rev. Pauli, his successor as Provost of the Church of Our Lady, and two other pastors to prepare and present a proposal for a new hymnal. It was an able committee from which a meritorious work might reasonably be expected.

Grundtvig was assigned to the important work of selecting and revising the old hymns to be included in the collection. He was an inspiring but at times difficult co-worker. Martensen recalls how Grundtvig at times aroused the committee to enthusiasm by an impromptu talk on hymnody or a recitation of one of the old hymns, which he loved so well. But he also recalls how he sometimes flared up and stormed out of the committee room in anger over some proposed change or correction of his work. When his anger subsided, however, he always conscientiously attempted to effect whatever changes the committee agreed on proposing. Yet excellent as much of his own work was, he possessed no particular gift for mending the work of others, and his corrections of one defect often resulted in another.

The committee submitted its work to the judgment of the conference in January 1845. The proposal included 109 hymns of which nineteen were by Kingo, seven by Brorson, ten by Ingemann, twenty-five by Grundtvig and the remainder by various other writers, old and new. It appeared to be a well balanced collection, giving due recognition to such newer writers as Boye, Ingemann, Grundt-

vig and others. But the conference voted to reject it. Admitting its poetical excellence and its sound Evangelical tenor, some of the pastors complained that it contained too many new and too few old hymns; others held that it bore too clearly the imprint of one man, a complaint which no doubt expressed the sentiment of Mynster and his friends. A petition to allow such churches as should by a majority vote indicate their wish to use the collection was likewise rejected by the Bishop.

Grundtvig was naturally disappointed by the rejection of a work upon which he had spent so much time and energy. The rejection furthermore showed him that he still could expect no consideration from the authorities with Mynster in control. He was soon able, however, to comfort himself with the fact that his hymns were becoming popular in private assemblies throughout the country, and that even a number of churches were beginning to use them at their regular services in defiance of official edicts. The demand for granting more liberty to the laymen in their church life, a demand Grundtvig long had advocated, was in fact becoming so strong that the authorities at times found it advisable to overlook minor infractions of official rulings. Noting this new policy, Grundtvig himself ventured to introduce some of the new hymns into his church. In the fall of 1845, he published a small collection of Christmas hymns to be used at the impending Christmas festival. When the innovation passed without objections, a similar collection of Easter hymns was introduced at the Easter services, after which other collections for the various seasons of the church year appeared quite regularly until all special prints were collected into one volume and used as "the hymnal of Vartov."

The work of preparing a new authorized hymnal was finally given to Grundtvig's closest friend, Ingemann. This hymnal appeared in 1855, under the title, **Roskilde Convent's Psalmbook**. This book served as the authorized hymnal of the Danish church until 1899, when it was replaced by **Hymnal for Church and Home**, the hymnal now used in nearly all Danish churches both at home and abroad. It contains in all 675 hymns of which 96 are by Kingo, 107 by Brorson, 29 by Ingemann and 173 by Grundtvig, showing that the latter at last had been recognized as the foremost hymnwriter of the Danish church.

Grundtvig's Hymns

GRUNDTVIG wrote most of his hymns when he was past middle age, a man of extensive learning, proved poetical ability and mature judgment, especially in spiritual things. Years of hard struggles and unjust neglect had sobered and mellowed but not aged or embittered him.

His long study of hymnology together with his exceptional poetical gift enabled him to adopt material from all ages and branches of Christian song, and to wield it into a homogenous hymnody for his own church. His treatment of the material is usually very free, so free that it is often difficult to discover any relationship between his translations and their supposed originals. Instead of endeavoring to transfer the metre, phrasing and sentiment of the original text, he frequently adopts only a single thought or a general idea from its content, and expresses this in his own language and form.

His original hymns likewise bear the imprint of his ripe knowledge and spiritual understanding. They are for the most part objective in content and sentiment, depicting the great themes of Biblical history, doctrine and life rather than the personal feeling and experiences of the individual. A large number of his hymns are, in fact, faithful but often striking adaptations of Bible stories and texts. For though he was frequently accused of belittling the Book of Books, his hymns to a larger extent than those of any other Danish hymnwriter are directly inspired by the language of the Bible. He possessed an exceptional ability to absorb the essential implications of a text and to present it with the terseness and force of an adage.

Although Grundtvig's hymns at times attain the height of pure poetry, their poetic merit is incidental rather than sought. In the pride of his youth he had striven, as he once complained, to win the laurel wreath, but had found it to be an empty honor. His style is more often forceful than lyrical. When the mood was upon him he could play the lyre with entrancing beauty and gentleness, but he preferred the organ with all stops out.

His style is often rough but expressive and rich in imagery. In this he strove to supplant time-honored similes and illustrations from Biblical lands with native allusions and scenes. Pictures drawn from the Danish landscape, lakes and streams, summer and winter, customs and life abound in his songs, giving them a home-like touch that has endeared them to millions.

His poetry is of very unequal merit. He was a prolific writer, producing, besides many volumes of poetry on various subjects, about three thousand hymns and songs. Among much that is excellent in this vast production there are also dreary stretches of rambling loquacity, hollow rhetoric and unintelligible jumbles of words and phrases. He could be insupportably dull and again express more in a single stanza, couplet or phrase than many have said in a whole book. A study of his poetry is, therefore, not unlike a journey through a vast country, alternating in fertile valleys, barren plains and lofty heights with entrancing views into far, dim vistas.

This inconsistency in the work of a man so eminently gifted as Grundtvig is explainable only by his method of writing. He was an intuitive writer and preferred to be called a "skjald" instead of a poet. The distinction is significant but somewhat difficult to define. As Grundtvig himself understood the term, the "skjald", besides being a poet, must also be a seer, a man able to envision and express what was still hidden to the common mortal. "The skjald is," he says, "the chosen lookout of life who must reveal from his mountain what he sees at life's deep fountain. When gripped by his vision," he says further, the skjald is "neither quiescent nor lifeless but, on the contrary, lifted up into an exceptional state of sensitiveness in which he sees and feels things with peculiar vividness and power. I know of nothing in this material world to which the skjald may more fittingly be likened than a tuned harp with the wind playing upon it."

A skjald in Grundtvig's conception was thus a man endowed with the gift of receiving direct impressions of life and things, of perceiving especially the deeper and more fundamental truths of existence intuitively instead of intellectually. Such perceptions, he admitted, might lack the apparent clarity of reasoned conclusions, but would approach nearer to the truth. For life must be understood from within, must be spiritually discerned. It could never be comprehended by mere intellect or catalogued by supposed science.

He knew, however, that his work was frequently criticized for

its ambiguity and lack of consistency. But he claimed that these defects were unavoidable consequences of his way of writing. He had to write what he saw and could not be expected to express that clearly which he himself saw only dimly. "I naturally desire to please my readers," he wrote to Ingemann, "but when I write as my intuition dictates, it works well; ideas and images come to me without effort, and I fly lightly as the gazelle from crag to crag, whereas if I warn myself that there must be a limit to everything and that I must restrain myself and write sensibly, I am stopped right there. And I have thus to choose between writing as the spirit moves me, or not writing at all."

This statement, although it casts a revealing light both upon his genius and its evident limitations, is no doubt extreme. However much Grundtvig may have depended on his momentary inspiration for the poetical development of his ideas, his fundamental views on life were exceptionally clear and comprehensive. He knew what he believed regarding the essential verities of existence, of God and man, of good and evil, of life and death. And all other conceptions of his intuitive and far-reaching spirit were consistently correlated to these basic beliefs.

Bishop H. Martensen, the celebrated theologian, relates an illuminating conversation between Grundtvig and the German theologian, P. K. Marheincke, during a visit which the Bishop had arranged between the two men. Dr. Marheincke commenced a lengthy discourse on the great opposites in life, as for instance between thinking and being, and Grundtvig replied, "My opposites are life and death" (Mein Gegensatz ist Leben und Tod).

"The professor accepted my statement somewhat dubiously," Grundtvig said later, "and admitted that that was indeed a great contrast, but—" The difference between the two men no doubt lay in the fact that Prof. Marheincke, the speculative theologian, was principally interested in the first part of the assumed contrast—thinking, whereas Grundtvig's main concern was with the last—being, existence, life. In real life there could be no more fundamental, no farther reaching contrast than the continuous and irreconcilable difference between life and death. The thought of this contrast lies at the root of all his thinking and colors all his views. From the day of his conversion until the hour of his death, his one consuming interest was to illuminate the contrast between the two irreconcilable enemies and to encourage anything that would strengthen the one and defeat the other.

Grundtvig loved life in all its highest aspects and implications, and he hated death under whatever form he saw it. "Life is from heaven, death is from hell," he says in a characteristic poem. The one is representative of all the good the Creator intended for his creatures, the other of all the evil, frustration and destruction the great destroyer brought into the world. There can be no reconciliation or peace between the two, the one must inevitably destroy or be destroyed by the other. He could see nothing but deception in the attempts of certain philosophical or theological phrasemakers to minimize or explain away the eternal malignity of death, man's most relentless foe. A human being could fall no lower than to accept death as a friend. Thus in a poem:

Yea, hear it, ye heavens, with loathing and grief;
The sons of the Highest now look for relief
In the ways of damnation
And find consolation
In hopes of eternal death.

But death is not present only at the hour of our demise. It is present everywhere; it is active in all things. It destroys nations, corrupts society, robs the child of its innocence, wipes the bloom from the cheeks of youth, frustrates the possibilities of manhood and makes pitiful the white hair of the aged. For death, as all must see, is only the wage of sin, the ripe fruit of evil.

I recognize now clearly;
Death is the wage of sin,
It is the fruitage merely
Of evil's growth within.

And its danger is so actual because it is active in every individual in himself as well as in others:

When I view the true condition
Of my troubled, restless heart,
Naught but sin can I envision
Even to its inmost part.

Such then is his fundamental view of the condition of man, a being in the destructive grip of a relentless foe, a creature whose greatest need is "a hero who can break the bonds of death". And there is but one who can do that, the Son of God.

Grundtvig's hymns abound in terms of adoration for the Savior of Man. He names Him the "Joy of Heaven", "The Fortune of Earth", "The Fount of Light", "The Sovereign of Life", "The Fear of Darkness", "The Terror of Death", and speaks of the day when

all the "nations of the earth shall offer praise in the offer bowl of His name. "But he sees the Christ less as the suffering Lamb of God than as the invincible conqueror of death and the heroic deliverer of man.

Like his other hymns most of his hymns to the Savior are objective rather than subjective. They present the Christ of the Gospels, covering his life so fully that it would be possible to compile from them an almost complete sequence on His life, work and resurrection. The following stately hymn may serve as an appropriate introduction to a necessarily brief survey of the group:

Jesus, the name without compare;
Honored on earth and in heaven,
Wherein the Father's love and care
Are to His children now given.
Saviour of all that saved would be,
Fount of salvation full and free
Is the Lord Jesus forever.

Jesus, the name alone on earth
For our salvation afforded.
So on His cross of precious worth
Is in His blood it recorded.
Only in that our prayers are heard,
Only in that when hearts are stirred
Doth now the Spirit us comfort.

Jesus, the name above the sky
Wherein, when seasons are ended,
Peoples shall come to God on high,
And every knee shall be bended,
While all the saved in sweet accord
Chorus the praise of Christ, the Lord,
Savior beloved by the Father.

Grundtvig sang of Christmas morning "as his heaven on earth", and he wrote some of the finest Christmas hymns in the Danish language. A number of these have already been given. The following simple hymn from an old Latin-Danish text is still very popular.

A babe is born in Bethlehem,
Bethlehem,
Rejoice, rejoice Jerusalem;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

A lowly virgin gave Him birth,
Gave Him birth,
Who rules the heavens and the earth;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

He in a simple manger lay,
Manger lay,
Whom angels praise with joy for aye;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

And wise men from the East did bring,
East did bring,
Gold, myrrh and incense to the King;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

Now all our fears have passed away,
Passed away,
The Savior blest was born today;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

God's blessed children we became,
We became,
And shall in heaven praise His name;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

There like the angels we shall be,
We shall be,
And shall the Lord in glory see;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

With gladsome praises we adore,
We adore,
Our Lord and Savior evermore;
Hallelujah, hallelujah.

His hymns on the life and work of our Lord are too numerous to be more than indicated here. The following hymn on the text, "Blessed are the eyes that see what ye see, and the ears that hear what ye hear", is typical of his expository hymns.

Blessed were the eyes that truly
Here on earth beheld the Lord;
Happy were the ears that duly
Listened to His living word,
Which proclaimed the wondrous story
Of God's mercy, love and glory.

Kings and prophets long with yearning
Prayed to see His day appear;
Angels with desire were burning
To behold the golden year
When God's light and grace should quicken
All that sin and death had stricken.

He who, light and life revealing,
By His Spirit stills our want;
He, who broken hearts is healing

By His cup and at the font,
Jesus, Fount of joy incessant,
Is with light and grace now present.

Eyes by sin and darkness blinded
May now see His glory bright;
Hearts perverse and carnal minded
May obtain His Spirit's light,
When, contrite and sorely yearning,
They in faith to Him are turning.

Blessed are the eyes that truly
Now on earth behold the Lord;
Happy are the ears that duly
Listen to His living word!
When His words our spirits nourish
Shall the kingdom in us flourish.

Grundtvig reaches his greatest height in his hymns of praise to Christ, the Redeemer. Many of his passion hymns have not been translated into English. In the original, the following hymn undoubtedly ranks with the greatest songs of praise to the suffering Lord.

Hail Thee, Savior and Atoner!
Though the world Thy name dishonor,
Moved by love my heart proposes
To adorn Thy cross with roses
And to offer praise to Thee.

O what moved Thee so to love us,
When enthroned with God above us,
That for us Thou all wouldst offer
And in deep compassion suffer
Even death that we might live.

Love alone Thy heart was filling
When to suffer Thou wert willing.
Rather givest Thou than takest,
Hence, O Savior, Thou forsakest
All to die in sinner's place.

Ah, my heart in deep contrition
Now perceives its true condition,
Cold and barren like a mountain,
How could I deserve the fountain
Of Thy love, my Savior dear.

Yet I know that from thy passion
Flows a river of salvation
Which can bid the mountain vanish,
Which can sin and coldness banish,
And restore my heart in Thee.

Lord, with tears I pray Thee ever:
Lead into my heart that river,
Which with grace redeeming cleanses
Heart and soul of all offences,
Blotting out my guilt and shame.

Lord, Thy life for sinners giving,
Let in Thee me find my living
So for Thee my heart is beating,
All my thoughts in Thee are meeting,
Finding there their light and joy.

Though all earthly things I cherish
Like the flowers may fade and perish,
Thou, I know, wilt stand beside me;
And from death and judgment hide me;
Thou hast paid the wage of sin.

Yes, my heart believes the wonder
Of Thy cross, which ages ponder!
Shield me, Lord, when foes assail me,
Be my staff when life shall fail me;
Take me to Thy Paradise.

Grundtvig's Easter hymns strike the triumphant note, especially such hymns as "Christ Arose in Glory", "Easter Morrow Stills Our Sorrow", and the very popular,

Move the signs of gloom and mourning*
From the garden of the dead.
For the wreaths of grief and yearning,
Plant bright lilies in their stead.
Carve instead of sighs of grief
Angels' wings in bold relief,
And for columns, cold and broken,
Words of hope by Jesus spoken.

His Easter hymns fail as a whole to reach the height of his songs for other church festivals. In this respect, they resemble the hymnody of the whole church, which contains remarkably few really great hymns on the greatest events in its history. It is as though the theme were too great to be expressed in the language of man.

Grundtvig wrote a number of magnificent hymns on the themes of our Lord's ascension and His return to judge the quick and the dead. Of the latter, the hymn given below is perhaps the most favored of those now available in English.

* Another translation: "Take away the signs of mourning" by P. C. Paulsen in "Hymnal for Church and Home".

Lift up thy head, O Christendom!
Behold above the blessed home
For which thy heart is yearning.
There dwells the Lord, thy soul's delight,
Who soon with power and glory bright
Is for His bride returning.

And when in every land and clime,
All shall behold His signs sublime,
The guilty world appalling,
Then shalt with joy thou lift thine eyes
And see Him coming in the skies,
While suns and stars are falling.

While for His coming thou dost yearn,
Forget not why His last return
The Savior is delaying,
And ask Him not before His hour
To shake the heavens with His power,
Nor judge the lost and straying.

O saints of God, for Sodom pray
Until your prayers no more can stay
The judgment day impending.
Then cries the Lord: "Behold, I come!"
And ye shall answer: "To Thy home
We are with joy ascending!"

Then loud and clear the trumpet calls,
The dead awake, death's kingdom falls,
And God's elect assemble.
The Lord ascends the judgment throne,
And calls His ransomed for His own,
While hearts in gladness tremble.

Grundtvig is often called the Singer of Pentecost. And his hymns on the nature and work of the Spirit do rank with his very best. He believed in the reality of the Spirit as the living, active agent of Christ in His church. As the church came into being by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, so our Lord still builds and sanctifies it by the Spirit, working through His words and sacraments. His numerous hymns on the Spirit are drawn from many sources, both ancient and modern. His treatment of the originals is so free, however, that it is difficult in most cases to know whether his versions should be accepted as adaptations or originals. Of mere translations there are none. The following version of the widely known hymn, "Veni Sancte Spiritus," may serve to illustrate his work as a transplanter of hymns.

Holy Spirit, come with light,
Break the dark and gloomy night
With Thy day unending.
Help us with a joyful lay
Greet the Lord's triumphant day
Now with might ascending.

Comforter so wondrous kind,
Noble guest of heart and mind
Fix in us Thy dwelling.
Give us peace in storm and strife,
Fill each troubled heart and life
With Thy joy excelling.

Make salvation clear to us,
Who despite our sin and dross
Would exalt the Spirit.
For without Thine aid and love
All our life and work must prove
Vain and without merit.

Raise or bow us with Thine arm,
Break temptation's evil charm,
Clear our clouded vision.
Fill our hearts with longing new,
Cleanse us with Thy morning dew,
Tears of deep contrition.

Blessed Fount of life and breath,
Let our hope in view of death
Blossom bright and vernal;
And above the silent tomb
Let the Easter lilies bloom,
Signs of life eternal.

Many of Grundtvig's original hymns evince a strong Danish coloring, a fact which is especially evident in a number of his Pentecost hymns. Pentecost comes in Denmark at the first breath of summer when nature, prompted by balmy breezes, begins to unfold her latent life and beauty. This similarity between the life of nature and the work of the Spirit is strikingly expressed in a number of his Pentecost hymns.

The following hymn, together with its beautiful tune, is rated as one of the most beautiful and, lyrically, most perfect hymns in Danish. Because of its strong Danish flavor, however, it may not make an equal appeal to American readers. The main thought of the hymn is that, as in nature, so also in the realm of the Spirit, summer is now at hand. The coming of the Spirit completes God's

plan of salvation and opens the door for the unfolding of a new life. The translation is by Prof. S. D. Rodholm.

The sun now shines in all its splendor,
The fount of life and mercy tender;
Now bright Whitsunday lilies grow
And summer sparkles high and low;
Sweet songsters sing of harvest gold
In Jesus' name a thousand fold.

The peaceful nightingales are filling
The quiet night with music thrilling.
Thus all that to the Lord belong
May rest in peace and wake with song,
May dream of life beyond the skies,
And with God's praise at daylight rise.

It breathes from heaven on the flowers,
It whispers home-like in the bowers,
A balmy breeze comes to our coast
From Paradise, no longer closed,
And gently purls a brooklet sweet
Of life's clear water at our feet.

This works the Spirit, still descending,
And tongues of fire to mortals lending,
That broken hearts may now be healed,
And life with grace and love revealed
In Him, who came from yonder land
And has returned to God's right hand.

Awaken then all tongues to honor
Lord Jesus Christ, our blest Atoner;
Let every voice in anthems rise
To praise the Savior's sacrifice.
And thou, His Church, with one accord
Arise and glorify the Lord.

Of his other numerous hymns on the Spirit, the one given below is, perhaps, one of the most characteristic.

Holy Ghost, our Interceder,
Blessed Comforter and Pleader
With the Lord for all we need,
Deign to hold with us communion
That with Thee in blessed union
We may in our life succeed.

Heavenly Counsellor and Teacher,
Make us through Thy guidance richer
In the grace our Lord hath won.

Blest Partaker of God's fullness,
Make us all, despite our dullness,
Wiser e'en than Solomon.

Helper of the helpless, harken
To our pleas when shadows darken;
Shield us from the beasts of prey,
Rouse the careless, help the weary,
Bow the prideful, cheer the dreary,
Be our guest each passing day.

Comforter, whose comfort lightens
Every cross that scars and frightens,
Succor us from guilt and shame.
Warm our heart, inspire our vision,
Add Thy voice to our petition
As we pray in Jesus' name.

Believing in the Spirit, Grundtvig also believed in the kingdom of God, not only as a promise of the future but as a reality of the present.

Right among us is God's kingdom
With His Spirit and His word,
With His grace and love abundant
At His font and altar-board.

Among his numerous hymns on the nature and work of God's kingdom, the following is one of the most favored.

Founded our Lord has upon earth a realm of the Spirit
Wherein He fosters a people restored by His merit.

It shall remain
People its glory attain,
They shall the kingdom inherit.

Forward like light of the morning its message is speeding,
Millions receive and proclaim it with gladness exceeding

For with His word
God doth His Spirit accord,
Raising all barriers impeding.

Jesus, our Savior, with God in the highest residing,
And by the Spirit the wants of Thy people providing,
Be Thou our life,
Shield and defender in strife,
Always among us abiding.

Then shall Thy people as Lord of the nations restore Thee,
Even by us shall a pathway be straightened before Thee
Till everywhere,
Bending in worship and prayer,
All shall as Savior adore Thee.

The kingdom of God is the most wonderful thing on earth.

Most wonderful of all things is
The kingdom Jesus founded.
Its glory, treasure, peace and bliss
No tongue has fully sounded.

Invisible as mind and soul,
And yet of light the fountain,
It sheds its light from pole to pole
Like beacons from a mountain.

Its secret is the word of God,
Which works what it proposes,
Which lowers mountains high and broad
And clothes the wastes with roses.

Though foes against the kingdom rage
With hatred and derision,
God spreads its reign from age to age,
And brings it to fruition.

Its glory rises like a morn
When waves at sunrise glitter,
Or as in June the golden corn
While birds above it twitter.

It is the glory of the King
Who bore affliction solely
That he the crown of life might bring
To sinners poor and lowly.

And when His advent comes to pass,
The Christian's strife is ended,
What now we see as in a glass
Shall then be comprehended.

Then shall the kingdom bright appear
In glory true and vernal,
And usher in the golden year
Of peace and joy eternal.

But the kingdom of God here on earth is represented by the Christian church, wherein Christ works by the Spirit through His word and sacraments. Of Grundtvig's many splendid hymns of the church, the following, in the translation of Pastor Carl Doving, has become widely known in all branches of the Lutheran church in America. Pastor Doving's translation is not wholly satisfactory, however, to those who know the forceful and yet so appealing language of the original, a fate which, we are fully aware, may also befall the following new version.

Built on a rock the church of God
Stands though its towers be falling;
Many have crumbled beneath the sod,
Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to come,
But above all the souls that roam,
Weary for rest everlasting.

God, the most high, abides not in
Temples that hands have erected.
High above earthly strife and sin,
He hath his mansions perfected.
Yet He, whom heavens cannot contain,
Chose to abide on earth with man
Making their body His temple.

We are God's house of living stones,
Built for the Spirit's indwelling.
He at His font and table owns
Us for His glory excelling.
Should only two confess His name,
He would yet come and dwell with them,
Granting His mercy abounding.

Even the temples built on earth
Unto the praise of the Father,
Are like the homes of hallowed worth
Whence we as children did gather.
Glorious things in them are said,
God there with us His covenant made,
Making us heirs of His kingdom.

There we behold the font at which
God as His children received us;
There stands the altar where His rich
Mercy from hunger relieved us.
There His blest word to us proclaim:
Jesus is now and e'er the same,
So is His way of salvation.

Grant then, O Lord, where'er we roam,
That, when the church bells are ringing,
People in Jesus' name may come,
Praising His glory with singing.
"Ye, not the world, my face shall see;
I will abide with you," said He.
"My peace I leave with you ever."

As a believer in objective Christianity, Grundtvig naturally exalts the God-given means of grace, the word and sacraments, through which the Spirit works. In one of the epigrammatic expressions often found in his writings, he says:

We are and remain,
 We live and attain
 In Jesus, God's living word
 When His word we embrace
 And live by its grace,
 Then dwells He within us, our Lord.

This firm belief in the actual presence of Christ in His word and sacraments lends an exceptional realism to many of his hymns on the means of grace. Through the translation by Pastor Doving the following brief hymn has gained wide renown in America.

God's word is our great heritage,
 And shall be ours forever.
 To spread its light from age to age,
 Shall be our chief endeavor.
 Through life it guards our way,
 In death it is our stay.
 Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
 We keep its teachings pure
 Throughout all generations.

Of his numerous hymns on baptism, the following, which an American authority on hymnody calls the finest baptismal hymn ever written, is perhaps the most representative.

O let Thy spirit with us tarry,
 Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 So that the babes we to Thee carry
 May be unto Thy death baptized.

Lord, after Thee we humbly name them,
 O let them in Thy name arise!
 If they should stumble, Lord, reclaim them,
 That they may reach Thy paradise.

If long their course, let them not falter.
 Give to Thine aged servants rest.
 If short their race, let by Thine altar
 Them like the swallows find a rest.

Upon their heart, Thy name be written,
 And theirs within Thine own right hand,
 That even when by trials smitten,
 They in Thy covenant firm may stand.

Thine angels sing for children sleeping,
 May they still sing when death draws nigh.
 Both cross and crown are in Thy keeping.
 Lord, lead us all to Thee on high.

His communion hymns are gathered from many sources. Of his originals the following tender hymn is perhaps the most typical.

Savior, whither should we go
 From the truest friend we know,
 From the Son of God above,
 From the Fount of saving love,
 Who in all this world of strife
 Hath alone the word of life.

No, I dare not turn from Thee,
 Though Thy word oft chasten me,
 For throughout this world, O Lord,
 Death is still the cruel word.
 Whoso saves the soul from death
 Brings redemption, life and breath.

"Eat my flesh and drink my blood."
 Saith our Lord, so kind and good.
 "Whoso takes the bread and wine,
 Shall receive my life divine,
 Be redeemed from all his foes
 And arise as I arose."

Hear Him then, my heart distressed,
 Beating anxious in my breast.
 Take Thy Savior at His word,
 Meet Him at His altar-board,
 Eat His body, drink His blood,
 And obtain eternal good.

Grundtvig also produced a great number of hymns for the enrichment of other parts of the church service. Few hymns thus strike a more appropriate and festive note for the opening service than the short hymn given below.

Come, Zion, and sing to the Father above;
 Angels join with you
 And thank Him for Jesus, the gifts of His love.
 We sing before God in the highest.

Strike firmly, O Psalmist, the jubilant chord;
 Golden be your harp
 In praise of Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord.
 We sing before God in the highest.

Then hear we with rapture the tongues as of fire,
 The Spirit draws nigh,
 Whose counsels with comforts our spirits inspire,
 We sing before God in the highest.

Equally fine is his free rendering of the 84th psalm.

Fair beyond telling,
Lord, is Thy dwelling,
Filled with Thy peace.
Oh how I languish
And, in my anguish,
Wait for release
That I may enter Thy temple, O Lord,
With Thee communing in deepest accord.

With Thy compassion,
Lord of Salvation,
Naught can compare.
Even the sparrow
Safe from the arrow
Rests in Thy care.
And as Thou shieldest the bird in its nest,
So let my heart in Thy temple find rest.

Years full of splendors,
Which to offenders
Earth may afford,
Never can measure
One day of pleasure
Found with Thee, Lord,
When on the wings of Thy quickening word
Souls are uplifted and Thou art adored.

Quicken in spirit,
Grow in Thy merit
Shall now Thy friends.
Blessings in showers
Filled with Thy powers
On them descends
Until at home in the city of gold
All shall in wonder Thy presence behold.

Grundtvig's hymns are for the most part church hymns, presenting the objective rather than the subjective phase of Christian faith. He wrote for the congregation and held that a hymn for congregational singing should express the common faith and hope of the worshippers, rather than the personal feelings and experiences of the individual. Because of this his hymns are frequently criticized for their lack of personal sentiment. The personal note is not wholly lacking in his work, however, as witnessed by the following hymn.

Suffer and languish,
Tremble in anguish
Must every soul that awakes to its guilt.

Sternly from yonder,
Sinai 'doth thunder:
Die or achieve what no sinner fulfilled.

Tremble with gladness,
Smile through their sadness
Shall all that rest in the arms of the Lord.
Grace beyond measure,
Comfort and treasure
Gathers the heart from His merciful word.

Bravely to suffer,
Gladly to offer
Praises to God 'neath the weight of our cross,
This will the Spirit
Help us to merit
Granting a breath from God's heaven to us.

Even stronger is the personal sentiment of this appealing hymn.

With her cruse of alabaster,
Filled with ointment rare and sweet,
Came the woman to the Master,
Knelt contritely at His feet,
Feeling with unfeigned contrition
How unfit was her condition
To approach the Holy One.

Like this woman, I contritely
Often must approach the Lord,
Knowing that I cannot rightly
Ask a place beside His board.
Sinful and devoid of merit,
I can only cry in spirit:
Lord, be merciful to me.

Lord of Grace and Mercy, harken
To my plea for grace and light.
Threatening clouds and tempests darken
Now my soul with gloomy night.
Let, despite my guilt and error,
My repenting tears still mirror
Thy forgiving smile, O Lord.

The following hymn likewise voices the need for personal perseverance.

Hast to the plow thou put thy hand
Let not thy spirit waver,
Heed not the world's allurements grand,
Nor pause for Sodom's favor.

But plow thy furrow, sow the seed,
Though tares and thorns thy work impede;
For they, who sow with weeping,
With joy shall soon be reaping.

But should at times thy courage fail—
For all may fail and falter—
Let not the tempting world prevail
On thee thy course to alter.
Each moment lost in faint retreat
May bring disaster and defeat.
If foes bid thee defiance,
On God be thy reliance.

If steadfast in the race we keep,
Our course is soon completed.
And death itself is but a sleep,
Its dreaded might defeated.
But those who conquer in the strife
Obtain the victor's crown of life
And shall in constant gladness
Forget these days of sadness.

It is, perhaps, in his numerous hymns on Christian trust, comfort and hope that Grundtvig reaches his highest. His contributions to this type of hymns are too numerous to be more than indicated here. But the hymn given below presents a fair example of the simplicity and poetic beauty that characterize many of them.

God's little child, what troubles you!
Think of your Heavenly Father true.
He will uphold you by His hand,
None can His might and grace withstand.
The Lord be praised!

Shelter and food and counsel tried
God for His children will provide.
They shall not starve, nor homeless roam,
Children may claim their Father's home.
The Lord be praised!

Birds with a song toward heaven soar,
Neither they reap nor lay in store,
But where the hoarder dies from need,
Gathers the little bird a seed.
The Lord be praised!

Clad are the flowers in raiment fair,
Wondrous to see on deserts bare.
Neither they spin nor weave nor sew
Yet no king could such beauty show.
The Lord be praised!

Flowers that bloom at break of dawn
Only to die when day is gone,
How can they with the child compare
That shall the Father's glory share?
The Lord be praised!

God's little child, do then fore'er
Cast on the Lord your every care.
Trust in His love, His grace and might
Then shall His peace your soul delight.
The Lord be praised!

God will your every need allay
Even tomorrow as yesterday,
And when the sun for you goes down
He will your soul with glory crown.
The Lord be praised!

Grundtvig's friends were sometimes called the "Merry Christians." There was nothing superficial or lighthearted, however, about the Christianity of their leader. It had been gained through intense struggles and maintained at the cost of worldly position and honor. But he did believe that God is love, and that love is the root and fount of life, as he says in the following splendid hymn. The translation is by the Reverend Doving.

Love, the fount of light from heaven,
Is the root and source of life;
Therefore God's decrees are given
With His lovingkindness rife.
As our Savior blest declareth
And the Spirit witness beareth,
As we in God's service prove;
God is light and God is love.

Love, the crown of life eternal,
Love the brightness is of light;
Therefore on His throne supernal
Jesus sits in glory bright.
He the Light and Life of heaven,
Who Himself for us hath given,
Still abides and reigns above
In His Father's boundless love.

Love, alone the law fulfilling,
Is the bond of perfectness;
Love, who came, a victim willing,
Wrought our peace and righteousness.
Therefore love and peace in union

Ever work in sweet communion
That through love we may abide
One with Him who for us died.

But the fruit of God's love is peace. As Grundtvig, in the hymn above, sings of God's love, so in the sweet hymn given below he sings of God's peace. The translation is by Pastor Doving.

Peace to soothe our bitter woes
God in Christ on us bestows;
Jesus wrought our peace with God
Through His holy, precious blood;
Peace in Him for sinners found
Is the Gospel's joyful sound.

Peace to us the church doth tell.
'Tis her welcome and farewell.
Peace was our baptismal dower;
Peace shall bless our dying hour.
Peace be with you full and free
Now and in eternity.

In this peace Christians find refuge and rest.

The peace of God protects our hearts
Against the tempter's fiery darts.
It is as sure when evening falls
As when the golden morning calls.

This peace our Savior wrought for us
In agony upon the cross,
And when He up to heaven soared,
His peace He left us in His word.

His word of peace new strength imparts
Each day to faint and troubled hearts,
And in His cup and at the font
It stills our deepest need and want.

This blessed peace our Lord will give
To all who in His Spirit live.
And even at their dying breath
Its comfort breaks the sting of death.

When Christ for us His peace hath won
He asked for faith and faith alone.
By faith and not by merits vain,
Our hearts God's blessed peace obtain.

Peace be with you, our Savior saith
In answer to the word of faith.
Whoso hath faith, shall find release
And dwell in God's eternal peace.

Grundtvig's hymns of comfort for the sick and dying rank with the finest ever written. He hates and fears death, hoping even that Christ may return before his own hour comes; but if He does not, he prays that the Savior will be right with him.

Lord, when my final hours impend,
Come in the person of a friend
And take Thy place beside me,
And talk to me as man to man
Of where we soon shall meet again
And all Thy joy betide me.

For though he knows he cannot master the enemy alone, if the Savior is there—

Death is but the last pretender
We with Christ as our defender
Shall engage and put to flight.

And His word will dispel all fear of the struggle:

Like dew upon the meadow
So falls the word of life
On Christians in the shadow
Of mortal's final strife.
The first fruit of its blessing
Is balm for fears distressing,
So gone is like a breath
The bitterness of death.

Like sun, when night is falling,
Sets stilly in the west
While birds are softly calling
Each other from their nest,
So when its brief day closes
That soul in peace reposes
Which knows that Christ the Lord
Is with it in His word.

And as we shiver slightly
An early summer morn
When blushing heavens brightly
Announce a day new-born,
So moves the soul immortal
With calmness through death's portal
That through its final strife
Beholds the Light of Life.

He could therefore exclaim:

Christian! what a morn of splendor
Full reward for every fear,
When the ransomed host shall render
Praises to its Savior dear,
Shall in heaven's hall of glory
Tell salvation's wondrous story,
And with the angelic throng
Sing the Lamb's eternal song.

Chapter Sixteen

Grundtvig's Later Years

GRUNDTVIG'S LATER YEARS present a striking contrast to the years of his earlier manhood. The lonely Defender of the Bible became a respected sage and the acknowledged leader of a fast growing religious and folk movement, both in Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries. His long years of continuous struggles were followed by years of fruitful work and an extensive growth of his religious and educational ideals until he was generally recognized as one of the most vital spiritual leaders of Scandinavia.

The first break in the wall of isolation that surrounded him came with an invitation from a group of students to "the excellent historian, N. F. S. Grundtvig, who has never asked for a reward but only for a chance to do good," to deliver a series of historical lectures at Borch's Collegium in Copenhagen. These lectures—seventy-one in all—were delivered before packed audiences during the summer and fall of 1838, and were so enthusiastically received that the students, on the evening of the concluding lecture, arranged a splendid banquet for the speaker, at which one of them sang:

Yes, through years of lonely struggle
Did you bravely fight,
Bearing scorn without complaining
Till your hair turned white

During his most lonely years Grundtvig once comforted himself with the words of a Greek sage: "Speak to the people of yesterday, and you will be heard by the people of tomorrow." Thus it

was, no doubt, a great satisfaction to him that the first public honor bestowed upon him should be accorded him by his nation's youth.

From that day his reputation and influence grew steadily. He became an honored member of several influential societies, such as the Society for Northern Studies, and the Scandinavian Society, an association of academicians from all the Scandinavian countries for the purpose of effecting a closer spiritual and cultural union between them. He also received frequent invitations to lecture both on outstanding occasions and before special groups. His work as a lecturer probably reached its culmination at a public meeting on the Skamlingsbanke, a wooded hill on the borders of Slesvig, where he spoke to thousands of profoundly stirred listeners, and at a great meeting of Scandinavian students at Oslo, Norway, in 1851, to which he was invited as the guest of honor and acclaimed both by the students and the Norwegian people. When Denmark became a constitutional kingdom in 1848, he was a member of the constitutional assembly and was elected several times to the Riksdag.

Meanwhile he worked ceaselessly for the development of his folk and educational ideals. After his conversion, he felt for a time that his new outlook was incompatible with his previous enthusiasm for the heroic life and ideals of the old North, and that he must now devote himself solely to the preaching of the Gospel. But the formerly mentioned decline of all phases of Danish life during the early part of the nineteenth century and the failure of his preaching to evoke any response from an indifferent people caused him to suspect a closer relationship between a people's religious and national or folk-life than he had hitherto recognized. Was not the folk life of a people, after all, the soil in which the Word of God must be sown, and could the Word bear fruit in a soil completely hardened and unprepared to receive it? If it could not, was not a folk awakening a necessary preparation for a Christian?

Under the spur of this question he undertook the translation of the sagas and developed his now widely recognized ideas of folk life and folk education, which later were embodied in the Grundtvigian folk schools. The first of these schools was opened at Rødding, Slesvig in 1844. The war between Denmark and Germany from 1848 to 1850 delayed the establishment of other similar schools. But in 1851, Christian Kold, the man who more than any other realized Grundtvig's idea of a school for life—as the folk schools were frequently called—opened his first school at Ryslinge,

Fyn. From there the movement spread rapidly not only to all parts of Denmark but also to Norway, Finland and Sweden. The latter country now has more schools of the Grundtvigian type than Denmark, and Norway and Finland have about as many.

To extend the influence of the movement lecture societies, reading circles, gymnastic societies, choral groups and the like were organized in almost every parish of Denmark. Thus before Grundtvig died, he had the satisfaction of seeing his work bear fruit in one of the most vital folk and educational movements of Scandinavia, a movement which has made a tremendous imprint upon all phases of life in the Northern countries and which today is spreading to many other parts of the world.

Grundtvig held that the life of a nation, Christian as well as national, never rose above the real culture of its common people. To be real, a culture had to be national, had to be based on a people's natural characteristics and developed in accordance with native history and traditions. The aim of all true folk-education was the awakening and enrichment of life and not a mere mental or practical training. The natural means for the attainment of this aim was a living presentation of a people's own cultural heritage, their native tradition, history, literature and folk life. But in all cases the medium of this presentation was the living, that is the spoken word by men and women who were themselves spiritually alive. Christianity, in his opinion, had not come to destroy but to cleanse and vivify the folk life of a people, and, since the latter was the soil in which the former had to grow, the fruitfulness of both demanded a living inter-action so that national life might become Christian and Christianity national.

In the practical application of these educational theories, Grundtvig took no active part. Aside from his conception of the idea and the development of much of the material used in the folk-school, his greatest contributions to their work are probably, his innumerable Biblical, historical and folk songs that were and are used in the schools:

Meanwhile he by no means neglected his religious work. Rationalism had been defeated, a sound Evangelical movement was fast revitalizing the church, and he could therefore concentrate his energy on a further development of the view that had come to him during his years of struggle. Among innumerable other works, he produced during his later years the splendid **Enlightenment of the Church**, published 1840-1844; **Teachings of Our Christian Child-**

hood, published 1855-1862; **The Seven Stars of the Churches**, published 1854-1855; and **The Church Mirror**, a series of lectures on the main currents of church history, published 1861-1863.

Although Grundtvig's views, and especially his distinction between the "living" and the "written" word, were strongly opposed by many, his profoundly spiritual conception of the church, as the body of Christ, and of the sacraments, as its true means of life, has greatly influenced all branches of the Danish church. In emphasizing the true indwelling of Christ in the creed and sacraments, he visualized the real presence of Him in the church and underscored the vital center of congregational worship with a realism that no theological dissertation can ever convey. Nor did he feel that in so doing he was in any sense diverging from true Lutheranism. The fact that Luther himself chose the creed and the words of institution of the sacrament as a basis for his catechism, showed, he contended, that the great Reformer also had recognized their distinction.

Despite frequent charges to the contrary, Grundtvig had no desire to engender a separatist movement in the church. He constantly warned his followers against any such tendency. In a closing speech to the Meeting of Friends in 1863, he said, "You can no more forbid the world to call you Grundtvigians than those whom Luther called to the Lord could forbid anyone to call them Lutherans, but do not yourself adopt that name. For history shows that some have let themselves be called Lutherans until they have almost lost the name of Christians. If anyone wishes to name us after any other than Christ, we ought to tell them that we accept nothing unto salvation except what the Christian church has taught and confessed from generation to generation. To or from that we neither add nor detract. We acknowledge without reservation that word of faith which Paul says is believed to righteousness and confessed unto salvation. The manner of teaching and believing that faith so that the Old Adam may be put off and the new put on, we hold to be a matter of enlightenment in which we shall be guided by Grundtvig, as we are guided by Luther, only in so far as we are convinced that he has been guided by Scripture and the Spirit. We also disclaim any intention of making our conception of Scripture an article of faith which must be accepted by the church." Grundtvig's followers would, no doubt, have profited greatly by remembering this truly liberal view of their leader.

Thus his years passed quietly onward, filled with fruitful la-

bor even unto the end. In contrast to his often stormy public career, Grundtvig's private life was quite peaceful and commonplace, subject only to the usual trials and sorrows of human existence. During the greater part of his life he was extremely poor, subsisting on a small government pension, the meager returns from his writings and occasional gifts from friends. For his own part this did not trouble him; his wants were few and easily satisfied. But he "liked to see shining faces around him," as he once wrote, and he had discovered that the face of a child could often be brightened by a small gift, which he was frequently too poor to give. "But if we would follow the Lord in these days," he wrote to a friend, "we must evidently be prepared to renounce all things for His sake and cast out all these heathen worries for dross and chaff with which we as Christians often distress ourselves."

Grundtvig was thrice married. His first wife, Lise Grundtvig, died January 4, 1851, after a long illness. Her husband said at her grave, "I stand here as an old man who is taking a decided step toward my own grave by burying the bride of my youth and the mother of my children who for more than forty years with unflinching loyalty shared all my joys and sorrows—and mostly latter."

But Grundtvig did not appear to be growing old. During the following summer he attended the great meeting of Scandinavian students at Oslo, where he was hailed as the youngest of them all. And on October 4 of the same year, he rejoiced his enemies and grieved many of his friends by marrying Marie Toft, of Rennebeck's Manor, a wealthy widow and his junior by thirty years. And despite dire predictions to the contrary, the marriage was very happy. Marie Toft was a highly intelligent and spiritual-minded woman who wholeheartedly shared her husband's spiritual views and ideals; and her death in 1854 came, therefore, as an almost overwhelming blow. In a letter to a friend a few weeks after her death, Grundtvig writes, "It was wonderful to be loved as unselfishly as Marie loved me. But she belonged wholly to God. He gave and He took; and despite all objections by the world and our own selfish flesh, the believing heart must exclaim, His name be praised. When I consider the greatness of the treasure that the Lord gave to me by opening this loving heart to me in my old age, I confess that it probably would have proved beyond my strength continuously to bear such good days; for had I not already become critical of all that were not like her, and indifferent to all things that were not concerned with her?"

The last remark, perhaps, refers to a complaint by his friends that he had become so absorbed in his wife that he neglected other things. If this had been the case, he now made amends by throwing himself into a whirl of activity that would have taxed the strength of a much younger man. During the following years, he wrote part of his formerly mentioned books on the church and Christian education, delivered a large number of lectures, resumed his seat in the Riksdag and, of course, attended to his growing work as a pastor. As he was also very neglectful of his own comfort in other ways, it was evident to all that such a strenuous life must soon exhaust his strength unless someone could be constantly about him and minister to his need. For this reason a high-minded young widow, the Baroness Asta Tugendreich Reetz, entered into marriage with him that she might help to conserve the strength of the man whom she considered one of the greatest assets her country possessed.

Grundtvig once said of his marriages that the first was an idyl, the second a romance and the third a fairy-tale. Others said harsher things. But Asta Grundtvig paid no attention to the scandal mongers. A very earnest Christian woman herself, she devoted all her energy to create a real Christian home for her husband and family. As Grundtvig had always lived much by himself, she wished especially to make their home a ready gathering place for all his friends and co-workers. In this she succeeded so well that their modest dwelling was frequently crowded with visitors from far and near, many of whom later counted their visit with Grundtvig among the richest experiences of their life.

Grundtvig's fiftieth anniversary as a pastor was celebrated with impressive festivities on May 29, 1861. The celebration was attended by representatives from all departments of government and the church as well as by a host of people from all parts of Scandinavia; and the celebrant was showered with gifts and honors. The king conferred upon him the title of bishop; the former queen, Carolina Amalia, presented him with a seven armed candlestick of gold from women in Norway, Sweden and Denmark; his friend, Pastor P. A. Fenger, handed him a gift of three thousand dollars from friends in Denmark and Norway to finance a popular edition of his *Hymns and Songs for the Danish Church*; and another friend, Gunni Busck, presented him with a plaque of gold engraved with his likeness and a line from his hymns, a gift from the congregation of Vartov.

Many of those who participated in this splendid jubilee felt that it would be of great benefit to them to meet again for mutual fellowship and discussion of pressing religious and national questions. And with the willing cooperation of Asta Grundtvig, it was decided to invite all who might be interested to a meeting in Copenhagen on Grundtvig's eightieth birthday, September 8, the following year. This Meeting of Friends—as it was named—proved so successful that it henceforth became an annual event, attended by people from all parts of Scandinavia. Although Grundtvig earnestly desired that these meetings should actually be what they were designed to be, meetings of friends for mutual help and enlightenment, his own part in them was naturally important. His powers were still unimpaired, and his contributions were rich in wisdom and spiritual insight. Knowing himself surrounded by friends, he often spoke with an appealing heartiness and power that made the Meetings of Friends unforgettable experiences to many.

Thus the once loneliest man in Denmark found himself in his old age honored by his nation, surrounded by friends, and besieged by visitors and co-workers, seeking his help and advice. He was always very approachable. In his younger days he had frequently been harsh and self-assertive in his judgment of others; but in his latter years he learned that kindness is always more fruitful than wrath. Sitting in his easy chair and smoking his long pipe, he talked frankly and often wittily with the many who came to visit him. Thus Bishop H. Martensen, the theologian, tells us that his conversation was admirably eloquent and interspersed with wit and humor. And a prominent Swedish author, P. Wisselgren, writes: "Some years ago I spent one of the most delightful evenings of my life with Bishop Grundtvig. I doubt that I have ever met a greater poet of conversation. Each thought was an inspiration and his heart was in every word he said."

Grundtvig's outward appearance, especially during his later years, was extremely charming. His strong countenance framed by long white locks and a full beard bore the imprint of a profound spiritual intellect and a benevolent calmness. The queen, Caroline Amalia, after her first meeting with him wrote, "Grundtvig has a most beautiful countenance, and he attracted me at once by his indescribably kind and benevolent appearance. What an interesting man he is, and what a pleasure it is to listen to his open and forthright conversation."

And so, still active and surrounded by friends, he saw his long,

fruitful life drawing quietly toward its close. In 1871 he opened the annual Meeting of Friends by speaking from the text: "See, I die, but the Lord shall be with you," and said in all likelihood this meeting would be the last at which he would be present. He lived, however, to prepare for the next meeting, which was to be held on September 11, 1872. On September 1, he conducted his service at Vartov as usual, preaching an exceptionally warm and inspiring sermon. But the following morning he passed away quietly while sitting in his easy chair and listening to his son read for him.

He was buried September 11, three days after his 89th birthday, in the presence of representatives from all departments of the government, one fourth of the Danish clergy and a vast assembly of people from all parts of Scandinavia.

An American writer recently named Grundtvig "The Builder of Modern Denmark." And there are few phases of modern Danish life which he has not influenced. His genius was so unique and his work so many-sided that with equal justice one might call him a historian, a poet, an educator, a religious philosopher, a hymnologist and a folk-leader. Yet there is an underlying unity of thought and purpose in all his work which makes each part of it merely a branch of the whole. This underlying unity is his clear conception of the spiritual and of man as a spiritual being who can attain his fullest development only through the widest possible realization of the spiritual in all his divine and human relationships. In every part of his work Grundtvig, therefore, invariably seeks to discover the spiritual realities. The mere form of a thing, the form of religion, of knowledge, of education, of government, of all human institutions and endeavors have no intrinsic value, are only skeletons and dead bones until they become imbued and vivified by the spirit. Thus Professor Martensen, who by no means belonged to the Grundtvigian party, writes, "But among the many things I owe to Grundtvig, I cherish above all his conception of the spiritual as the reality besides which all other things are nothing but shadows, and of the spirit inspired word as the mightiest power in human life. And he gave that to me not as a theory but as a living truth, a spiritual reality about which there could be not even a shadow of doubt."

Grundtvig found the spiritual in many things, in the myth of the North, in history, literature and, in fact, in all things through which man has to express his god-given nature. He had no patience with the Pietists who looked upon all things not directly religious

as evils with which a Christian could have nothing to do. Yet he believed above all in the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of spirits," the true agent of God in the world. The work of the Spirit was indispensable to man's salvation, and the fruit of that work, the regenerated Christian life, the highest expression of the spiritual. Since he believed furthermore, that the Holy Spirit works especially in the church through the word and sacraments, the church was to him the workshop of the Spirit.

In his famous hymn to the church bell, his symbol for the church, he writes "that among all noble voices none could compare with that of the ringing bell." Despite the many fields in which he traced the imprint of the spiritual, the church remained throughout his long life his real spiritual home, a fact which he beautifully expresses in the hymn below.

Hallowed Church Bell, not for wordly centers
Wast thou made, but for the village small
Where thy voice, as home and hearth it enters,
Blends with lullabies at eventfall.

When a child and in the country dwelling,
Christmas morning was my heaven on earth,
And thy chimes, like angel voices swelling,
Told with joy of my Redeemer's birth.

Louder still thy joyful chimes resounded,
When on wings of early morning borne,
They proclaimed: Awake with joy unbounded,
Christ arose this blessed Easter morn.

Sweeter even were thy tolls when blending
With the calm of summer eventide
And, as though from heaven above descending,
Bid me cast all grief and care aside.

Hence when now the day is softly ending,
Shadows fall and birds ascend their nest,
Like the flowers my head in silence bending,
I am chanting with my soul at rest:

When at last, O Church Bell, thou art tolling
O'er my grave while loved grieve and sigh,
Say to them, their troubled heart consoling,
He is resting with his Lord on high.

Other Danish Hymnwriters

THE DANISH CHURCH has produced a large number of hymn-writers, who, except for the greatness of Kingo, Brorson and Grundtvig, would have commanded general recognition. The present hymnal of the church contains contributions by about sixty Danish writers. Though the majority of these are represented by only one or two hymns, others have made large contributions.

Kingo, Brorson and Grundtvig, peculiarly enough, had few imitators. A small number of writers did attempt to imitate the great leaders, but they formed no school and their work for the most part was so insignificant that it soon disappeared. Thus even Kingo's great work inspired no hymnwriter of any consequence, and the fifty years between Kingo and Brorson added almost nothing to the hymnody of the church. Contemporary with Brorson, however, a few writers appeared whose songs have survived to the present day. Foremost among these is Ambrosius Stub, a unique and sympathetic writer whose work constitutes a distinct contribution to Danish poetry.

Ambrosius Stub was born on the island of Fyn in 1705, the son of a village tailor. Although extremely poor, he managed somehow to enter the University of Copenhagen, but his poverty compelled him to leave the school without completing his course. For a number of years, he drifted aimlessly, earning a precarious living by teaching or bookkeeping at the estates of various nobles, always dogged by poverty and a sense of frustration. Although he was gifted and ambitious, his lack of a degree and his continuous poverty prevented him from attaining the position in life to which his ability apparently entitled him. During his later years, he conducted a small school for boys at Ribe, a small city on the west coast of Jutland, where he died in abject poverty in 1758, only 53 years old.

Stub's work remained almost unknown during his lifetime, but a small collection of his poems, published after his death, gained him a posthumous recognition as the greatest Danish poet of the 18th century. Stub's style is extremely noble and expressive, devoid of the excessive bombast and sentimentality that many writers then mistook for poetry. He was of a cheerful disposition with a hopeful outlook upon life that only occasionally is darkened by

the hardships and disappointments of his own existence. Even the poems of his darker moods are colored by his inborn love of beauty and his belief in the fundamental goodness of life. Many of his best poems are of a religious nature, and expressive of his warm and trustful Christian faith. In view of the discouraging hardships and disappointments of his own life, the following much favored hymn throws a revealing light upon the spirit of its author.

Undismayed by any fortune
Life may have in store for me,
This, whatever be my portion,
I will always try to be.
If I but in grace abide,
Undismayed whate'er betide.

Undismayed when others harry
Mind and soul with anxious care;
If the Lord with me will tarry,
All my troubles disappear.
If I but in grace abide,
Undismayed whate'er betide.

Undismayed when others sighing,
Quail before the evil day,
On God's grace I am relying;
Nothing can me then dismay.
If I but in grace abide,
Undismayed whate'er betide.

Undismayed when others fearing,
See the hour of death draw nigh.
With the victor's crown appearing,
Why should I repine and sigh.
If I but in grace abide,
Undismayed whate'er betide.

Dearest Lord, if I may treasure
Thy abundant grace each day,
I shall cherish Thy good pleasure,
Be my portion what it may.
If I but in grace abide,
Undismayed whate'er betide.

The age of Rationalism discarded most of the old hymns but produced no worthwhile hymns of its own. The most highly praised hymnwriter of the period, Birgitte Boye, the wife of a for-ester, wrote a great number of hymns of which no less than 150 were included in a new hymnal published in 1870, by the renowned

statesman, Ove Hoegh Guldberg. Although excessively praised by the highest authorities of the period, Birgitte Boye's hymns contain nothing of permanent value, and have now happily been forgotten.

The Evangelical revival about the middle of the 19th century restored the old hymns to their former favor, and produced besides, a number of new hymnwriters of real merit. Among these, Casper J. Boye is, perhaps, the most prominent. Born of Danish parents at Kongsberg, Norway, in 1791, Boye entered the University of Copenhagen in 1820 where he first took up the study of law and then, of theology. After graduating from this department, he became a teacher at a Latin school and some years later, a pastor of the large Garrison Church in Copenhagen, where he remained until his death in 1851. Boye was a gifted writer, both on secular and religious themes. His numerous hymns appeared in six small volumes entitled: **Spiritual Songs**. They are marked by a flowing but at times excessively literary style and a quiet spiritual fervor. The following still is a favorite opening hymn.

Day is breaking, night is ended,
And the day of rest ascended
Upon church and countryside.
Like the day in brightness growing,
Grace from God is richer flowing;
Heaven's portals open wide.

O what joy this day is bringing,
When the chiming bells are ringing,
Calling man to prayer and praise!
All the angel host rejoices
And with gladsome, mellow voices
Thanks the Lord for light and grace.

Sin and death with fear and sorrow
And the burden of tomorrow
Shall not weigh my heart with care.
Unto all in tribulation
Doth the Lord of our salvation
On this day His peace declare.

Be it hushed in solemn stillness,
Must I weep in grief or illness,
Or confess my guilt and shame,
It is blessed to be weeping
When the hungry heart is reaping
Grace and peace in Jesus' name.

O Thou Fount of grace unbounded,
Who our wisdom hath confounded,

Whom but faith can comprehend!
 In Thy love my soul reposes;
 Heaven's portal never closes
 Till before Thy throne we stand.

Herman Andreas Timm, a younger contemporary of Boye, also wrote a large number of excellent hymns. He was born at Copenhagen in 1800, and was for many years pastor of the church on Amager, a suburb of the capital city. He died in 1866. His hymns appeared in a small volume of poems, published in 1834, under the title: **Spiritual Songs**. They are characterized by an easy literary style and an urgent spiritual appeal. The following very popular hymn is perhaps the best-known of those now available in English.

Dost thou know the living fountain
 Whence the stream of grace doth flow?
 Dry the streams from snowcapped mountain,
 Yet this stream shall fuller grow.
 From the very heart of God
 Flows its currents deep and broad,
 Unto every land and nation,
 Bringing mercy and salvation.

Come unto the living waters!
 Cried the prophets, do not shrink!
 God invites His sons and daughters:
 He that thirsteth come and drink.
 With this water God imparts
 Health and strength to sin-sick hearts.
 Why are ye then hesitating
 While the Lord with grace is waiting.

With us is the day appointed,
 God has kept His gracious word.
 He has come, the Lord's anointed;
 Men have seen the promised Lord.
 Saints of God from every race
 Found in Him the fount of grace,
 And, with joy that never ceases,
 Said: The Fount of Life is Jesus.

Hasten then! Let all assemble
 At this fountain pure and strong.
 Come, ye souls that fear and tremble,
 Come, ye old, and come ye young.
 Now the hour of grace is here,
 Draw then to its fountain near.
 Soon, ah soon! the day is over.
 Quickly night the world may cover.

Another contemporary of these writers, and perhaps the most prominent of the group, was Theodore Vilhelm Oldenburg. Oldenburg was born at Copenhagen in 1805, son of the Royal Chamberlain, Frederik Oldenburg. His mother died while he was still a boy, but his excellent father managed to give him a most careful training and a splendid education. He graduated "cum laude" from the University of Copenhagen in 1822, obtained the degree of Master of Arts during the following year, entered the department of theology and graduated from there three years later, also "cum laude." In 1830 he accepted a call to become pastor of the parish of Otterup and Sorterup on the island of Fyn. Here he won high praise for his conspicuously able and faithful work. Together with the gifted Bishop P. C. Kirkegaard, he was editor for a number of years of the influential periodical "Nordisk Tidsskrift for Kristelig Teologi," and also of the outstanding foreign mission paper, "Dansk Missionsblad." Through these papers he exerted a powerful and always beneficent influence upon the churches of both Denmark and Norway. His outstanding and richly blest service was cut short by death in 1842 when he was only 37 years old. He was carried to the grave to the strains of his own appealing hymn: "Thine, O Jesus, Thine Forever."

Oldenburg's quite numerous hymns were printed from time to time in various periodicals. They express in a noble and highly lyrical style the firm faith and warm religious fervor of his own consecrated life.

The hymn given below was written for a foreign mission convention shortly before his death.

Deep and precious,
 Strong and gracious
 Is the word of God above,
 Gently calling
 Sinners falling,
 To the Savior's arm of love.
 Unto all the word is given:
 Jesus is the way to heaven.

Blessed Savior,
 Wondrous favor
 Hast Thou shown our fallen race!
 Times may alter,
 Worlds may falter,
 Nothing moves Thy word of grace.
 With Thy word Thy grace abideth,
 And for all our needs provideth.

By Thy merit,
Through the Spirit
Draw all sinners, Lord, to Thee.
Sin and error,
Death and terror
By Thy word shall vanquished be.
Guide us all through life's straight portal,
Bear us into life immortal.

Besides Grundtvig the foremost hymnwriter of this period is his close friend, Bernhard Severin Ingemann, one of Denmark's most popular and beloved writers. He was born in 1789 in a parsonage on the island of Falster. His father died in 1800 when the son was only 11 years old, and his mother left the parsonage to settle in Slagelse, an old city on the island of Sjælland. Having graduated from the Latin school there in 1806, Ingemann entered the University of Copenhagen in the fall of the same year. During the English attack on Copenhagen in 1807, he enrolled in the student's volunteer corps and fought honorably in defense of the city. After graduating from the University, he was granted free board and room at Walkendorf's Collegium, an institution for the aid of indigent but promising young students. Here he devoted most of his time to literary pursuits and, during the following three years, he published a large number of works which won him a favorable name as a gifted lyrical poet of a highly idealistic type. As an encouragement to further efforts, the government granted him a two year stipend for travel and study in foreign parts. He visited Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy, and became acquainted with many famous literary leaders of that day, especially in Germany. On his return from abroad in 1822 he was appointed a lecturer at the famous school at Sorø on the island of Sjælland. In this charming old city with its splendid cathedral and idyllic surroundings he spent the remainder of his life in the peace and quiet that agreed so well with his own mild and seraphic nature. He died in 1862.

Inspired by Oehlenschlaeger and strongly encouraged by Grundtvig, Ingemann in 1824 began the issuance of his famous historical novels, based upon episodes from the romantic period of Danish history during the 13th and 14th centuries. To some extent the novels are modeled upon the similar works of Walter Scott but are written in a livelier style and more idealistic spirit than their English prototype. In later years their historical veracity has been gravely questioned. Enjoying an immense popularity both in Denmark and in Norway, these highly idealized pictures of the past

did much to arouse that national spirit which especially Grundtvig had labored long to awaken. After completing his historical novels, Ingemann again resumed his lyrical and fictional writings, producing a large number of poems, fairy-tales and novels that further increased his already immense popularity.



Bernhard Severin Ingemann

Despite the great popularity of Ingemann's secular writings, it is, nevertheless, his hymns and spiritual songs which will preserve his name the longest. His first collection of hymns, a small volume of morning and evening songs, appeared in 1822. This collection was followed in 1825 by a volume of church hymns, which was enlarged and reprinted in 1843. The favorable reception of these hymns caused Ingemann to be selected to prepare the new church hymnal, published in 1855, a task which he accomplished to the general satisfaction of all.

Ingemann's hymns faithfully reflect his own serene and idealistic nature. Their outstanding merits are a limpid, lyrical style and an implicit trust in the essential goodness of life and its Author.

Of Kingo's realistic conception of evil or Grundtvig's mighty vision of existence as a heroic battle between life and death, he has little understanding. The world of his songs is as peaceful and idyllic as the quiet countryside around his beloved Sorø. If at times he tries to take the deeper note, his voice falters and becomes artificial. But though his hymns on such themes as sin and redemption are largely a failure, he has written imperishable hymns of idealistic faith and childlike trust in the goodness and love of God.

The extreme lyrical quality and highly involved and irregular metre of many of Ingemann's hymns make them extremely difficult to translate, and their English translations fail on the whole to do justice. The translation given below is perhaps one of the best. It is the work of the Rev. P. C. Paulsen.

As wide as the skies is Thy mercy, O God;
Thy faithfulness shieldeth creation.
Thy bounteous hand from the mountains abroad
Is stretched over country and nation.

Like heaven's embrace is Thy mercy, O Lord;
In judgment profound Thou appearest.
Thou savest our souls through Thy life-giving word,
The cries of Thy children Thou hearest.

How precious Thy goodness, O Father above,
Where children of men are abiding.
Thou spreadest through darkness the wings of Thy love;
We under their pinions are hiding.

For languishing souls Thou preparest a rest,
The quivering dove Thou protectest;
Thou givest us being, eternal and blest,
In mercy our life Thou perfectest.

The following hymn is also quite popular.

The sun is rising in the east,
It gilds the heavens wide,
And scatters light on mountain crest,
On shore and countryside.

It rises from the valley bright,
Where Paradise once lay,
And bringeth life, and joy and light
To all upon its way.

It greets us from the land afar
Where man with grace was crowned,
And from that wondrous Morning Star,
Which Eastern sages found.
The starry host bow down before

The sun that passes them;
It seems so like that star of yore
Which shone on Bethlehem.

Thou Sun of Suns, from heaven come,
To Thee our praises rise
For every message from Thy home
And from Thy Paradise.

The most beloved of all Ingemann's hymns is his splendid
"Pilgrim Song."

Dejlig er Jorden,
Prægtig er Guds Himmel,
Skøn er Sjælenes Pilgrimsgang.
Gennem de fagre
Riger paa Jorden
Gaa vi til Paradis med Sang.

This hymn is written to the tune of "Beautiful Savior" which Ingemann, in common with many others, accepted as a marching tune from the period of the crusades. Although this historic origin has now been disproved, the tune united with Ingemann's text undoubtedly will remain the most beloved pilgrim song among the Danish and Norwegian peoples. Though fully aware of the impossibility of translating this tenderly beautiful song so that it is acceptable to those who know the original, the author presents the following translation in the hope that it may interest those who cannot read the original.

Fair is creation,*
Fairer God's heaven,
Blest is the marching pilgrim throng.
Onward through lovely
Regions of beauty
Go we to Paradise with song.

Ages are coming,
Ages are passing
Nations arise and disappear.
Never the joyful
Message from heaven
Wanes through the soul's brief sojourn here.

Angels proclaimed it
Once to the shepherds,
Henceforth from soul to soul it passed:
Unto all people
Peace and rejoicing,
Us is a Savior born at last.

* Another translation: "Beauty around us" by S. D. Rodholm in "A World of Song."

Of other hymns by Ingemann, which are now available in English, we may mention "Jesus, My Savior, My Shepherd Blest," "The Country Lies in Deep Repose" and "I Live and I Know the Span of My Years."

The last half of the 19th century also brought forth a number of Danish hymnwriters of considerable merit, such as Chr. Richardt, Pastor J. P. M. Paulli, Pastor Olfert Ricard and Pastor J. Schjorring. The latter is especially known by one song which has been translated into many languages and with which it seems appropriate to close this survey of Danish hymnody.

Love from God our Lord,
Has forever poured
Like a fountain pure and clear.
In its quiet source,
In its silent course
Doth the precious pearl appear.

Love from God our Lord,
Comes with sweet accord,
Like a pure and lovely bride.
Dwell within my heart,
Peace from God impart,
Heaven doth with Thee abide.

Love from God our Lord,
Has to man restored
Life and peace from heaven above.
Who in love remains,
Peace from God obtains;
God Himself is ever love.